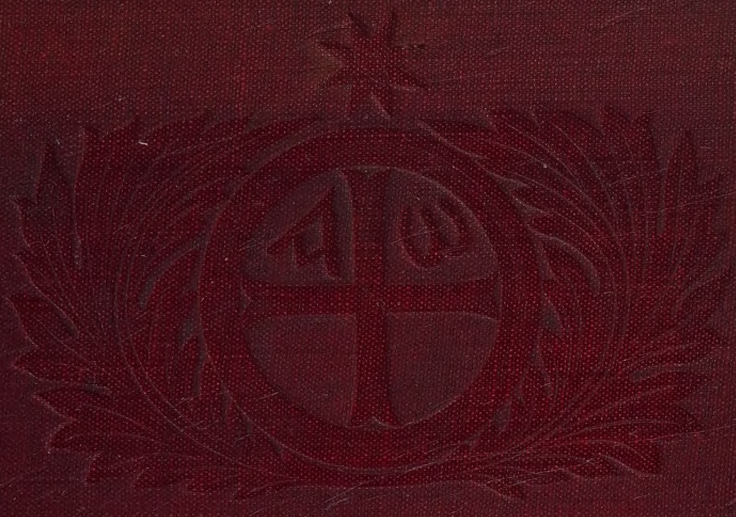

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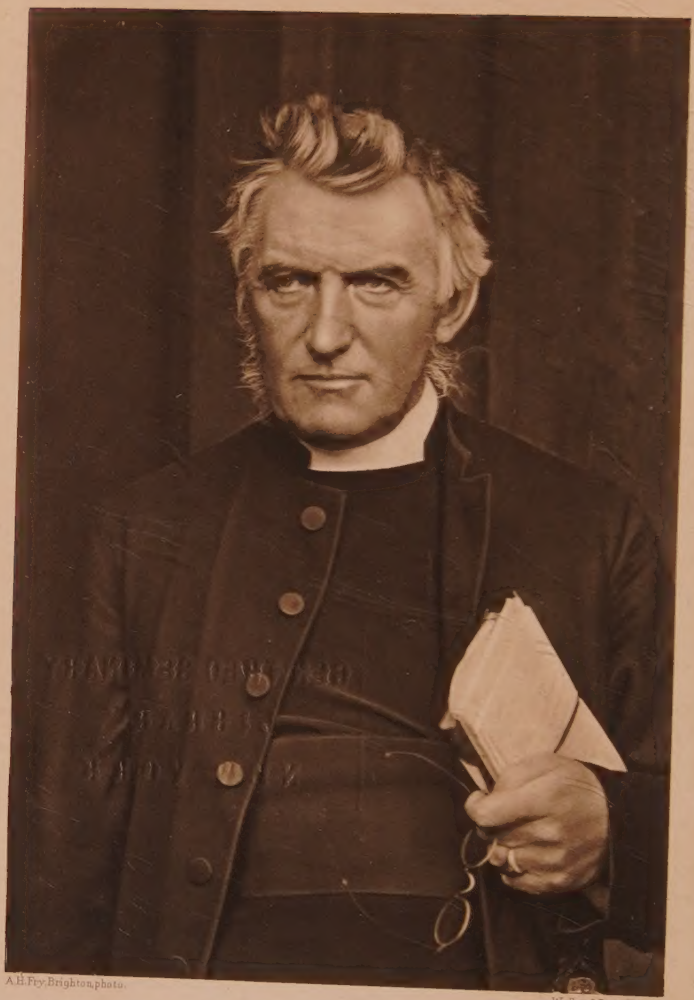

A.H. Fry, Brighton, photo.

Walker & Boutall photo.

The Most Rev. Edward Ralph Johnson
Bishop of Calcutta & Metropolitan of India.
1876 – 1898.

Missions—India

A HISTORY OF THE OXFORD MISSION TO CALCUTTA.

By GEORGE LONGRIDGE,
OF THE COMMUNITY OF THE RESURRECTION,
SOMETIME VICAR OF GROVE, WANTAGE.

WITH A PREFACE BY THE
RIGHT REV. EDWARD STUART TALBOT, D.D.,
LORD BISHOP OF ROCHESTER.

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TO

THE BRETHREN OF THE EPIPHANY

WHO HAVE THE COURAGE

NOT ONLY TO WORK

BUT TO WAIT.

30 Ap 1960
$2.00

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

THIS book is an endeavour to give a simple account of the work of the Oxford Mission to Calcutta, in the hope that it may not only stimulate the zeal of those who already know and are working for the Mission, but that it may also help to quicken the interest of Churchmen in general in what is, or ought to be, to the English Church the all important subject of the conversion of India. To the fact of the immense responsibility which rests upon England in this matter the Bishop of Rochester has drawn attention, clearly and powerfully, in the preface which he has most kindly written, and for which I desire to offer to him my respectful thanks.

I wish also to thank two friends who have helped

me much by their kindly criticism and advice, and my colleague, the Rev. Hugh Benson, who has been good enough to correct the proofs.

G. LONGRIDGE.

House of the Resurrection, Mirfield.
Epiphany, 1900.

PREFACE.

I EARNESTLY desire for this little book a large audience and a thoughtful reception; for it sets out in brief but sufficient outline one of the problems of England's Christian Empire, and tells of a tiny but invaluable effort towards its solution. The moment is timely for such matters. The voice of God through events and history is teaching Englishmen, as no words could ever teach, the lessons of Imperial responsibility. It drives home the questions why and for how long that Empire is given, what are its tasks, and what its true foundations and resources. The scope of such questions goes far beyond the particular case which suggests them. The lessons of Africa, and whatever quickening of national conscientiousness is gained there through sorrow and suffering, may show their effect in India. For India's is certainly the "leading case" in the list of

English responsibilities. Nowhere else does the future rest, under God, so absolutely upon us, or seem charged with possibilities for good and evil so enormous. Nowhere is the appeal to the stronger nation and more robust civilisation for parental care more urgent and pathetic.

Calcutta is but one corner of India, but, educationally as much as politically, it is a centre. Its educated class is but a fraction of India's enormous populations, but it is the fraction which is most directly susceptible of English influence, and which exercises the largest share of the power that belongs to speech and writing.

The case between us and this section of Indian life may be put into a nutshell: we must destroy; shall we help to build up? In view of our great administrative constructions, especially the educational organisation, this way of putting the case may seem a paradox; but it is not so to those who reflect that the first result of an inrush of foreign ideas, even if they were not the ideas of an advanced and critical civilisation, would be to undermine and discredit and destroy many of the institutions and forces which have been the support and strength of a people's life. We have to

recognise that "knowledge is power" only when it is wielded by a force greater than itself,—that force is life, the higher or spiritual life of a people. In this sense, as in others, it is true that "the letter killeth, the Spirit giveth life." The strength of a nation's life comes from the faith that is in it. Now we must, by our education, do much to destroy India's faiths. As Christian Englishmen we believe that we have a better faith to give, a faith which, to speak only of its social influence, is of incomparably higher bonding power and wholesome effect. Shall we do this second and higher part of our work? Shall we, I repeat, help to build up? The Government cannot do this; it can only give the indirect testimony—which is indeed invaluable—of a lofty and incorruptible justice and a humane and moral administration in system and in *personnel.* But the Church which speaks in the English tongue can bear witness whence it was that England received these great national blessings to impart to her dependencies. The Church can speak freely and without reserve of that faith in the true God and in Jesus Christ whom He hath sent, that faith in the stooping of God and the lifting of

man through Him, to which England owes all that makes her English best—not indeed its raw material, but its moulding and building and preserving.

All this is set out, but far better and with the convincing effect of concrete experience and expert testimony, in what follows (see, *e.g.*, p. 116). The upshot from the mouth of an Indian is expressed (p. 119) in the words, "The destiny of a nation is at stake. Mere let-aloneist attitude will not do."

But the book also contains a sketch of an attempt, vigorous, faithful, and practical, to meet the problem with an answer, and to turn these reflections into action. The characteristic of the moment for England and her Church seems to be that the confronting problems, at home and abroad, everywhere outmatch and overmaster by their scale and area and variety the resources for meeting them. The proportionate size of this little island on the map of the world is extraordinarily symbolical. But the courage of Englishmen and, one would hope, in a far deeper sense the faith of English Christians, do not stop at difficulties. To have done what we could must be everywhere the aim which animates our efforts. A little com-

munity, originating in the prayerful self-sacrifice of two or three men, though claiming with happy audacity representative relation with the greatest of English universities, is after all but a drop in India's ocean of life. But there are drops, spiritual as well as physical, of rare potency, and I cannot but believe that this has been, and will be, such an one. Faith and self-sacrifice, worship and sympathy, keen and active respect for all the parts and kinds of human faculty and knowledge, the union and freedom of a fellowship or brotherhood whose tie has been one of constraining reality while always voluntary—these, which have been the everyday equipment of the Oxford Mission to Calcutta, would certainly seem to give promise of the truest kind of work. Those to whom some forms of missionary work have not appealed may find here credentials which they can accept of first class work. They will notice the thorough belief in light ("It is not the high, but the low standard of education which is the danger," p. 211), the clear recognition that moral and religious work are in the end one (p. 145), the readiness, accordingly, to work patiently through the one for a future harvest of the other (as in the case of the Hostel for non-Christian

students—an oasis of pure life amidst corrupt surroundings, pp. 121-132), the largeness of heart with which men of strong dogmatic and ecclesiastical conviction cordially invoke the Christian work of others on their right and on their left to independent co-operation in the same field (p. 126). They will certainly recognise the fine and magic touch of personal sympathy, the strength and still more the patience of its compassion and desire to help; and they will hardly miss the springs of this in an inner life of communion with God.

We speak best of what we know and to those by whom we are known. My own reverence for the work of the Oxford Mission to Calcutta is largely of the grateful sort. We Oxford men of those days felt that its start worked with the words of our most 'prophetic' teacher (for such we felt 'Dr. King' to be) to enlarge our horizon of intellectual and religious responsibility. Among surroundings of academical debate it taught us the reality, modern as ever, of spiritual power. Willis and Argles showed us fresh examples of simplicity in responding to inward vocation from God; and the life of Philip Smith was to some of us in Oxford, as to

many not themselves Christians in Calcutta, a glimpse of the hem of the garment of Jesus Christ as He moved in the pure charm of Divine simplicity and compassion among the sons of men, and the little children came to Him.

God grant that whoever else neglects its quiet witness and its moving appeal, the voice of Oxford's own Mission in India may reach with gathering and constraining power some of Oxford's best sons in each succeeding generation of her life! One would like to hope that many a man whom Oxford has taught ambitions or ideals of noble living, and furnished with keen instruments for high work, without being able to show him how and when to realise the one and use the other, may find what he lacks at that little centre of Christian life and love in the capital of the great land of many nations which God has given to England, and may do work greater than can be reckoned for England's Empire and England's Church.

How long shall the call to shed their blood under England's flag, whatever the issue, or even to give their lives to English enterprise and administration, be heard so much more readily

by her sons than the call to swell the first battalion (surely it is England's!) in the bloodless crusade of Christ, or to quicken, under God, the life of coming generations with the old germinant, fruitful seed of the Word of His Truth?

EDW. ROFFEN.

FALCONHURST, EDEN BRIDGE,
St. John's Day, 1899.

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A SHORT HISTORY

OF THE

OXFORD MISSION TO CALCUTTA.

FROM 1880—1898.

CHAPTER I.

ORIGIN OF THE MISSION.

1879—1885.

"Men of action these!
Who, seeing just as little as you please,
Yet turn that little to account,—engage
With, do not gaze at,—carry on, a stage,
The work of the world, not merely make report."

IN the spring of 1879 one of the Cowley Fathers, who was holding a mission in Calcutta, was impressed with the great readiness which he found among the young educated Bengalis to discuss religious questions, and even to attend services at which he was able to preach to them. Many of them were members of the Brahmo Somaj,* a

* See Appendix A.

theistic sect of the Hindus, which at that time was attracting a good deal of attention in Calcutta; and there appeared to him to exist among them a strong sense of unsettlement and dissatisfaction with their own system of belief. This feeling and the evident religious susceptibilities of these young men seemed to him to offer a real opportunity for Christian missionary work among them. So strongly did Bishop Johnson, the Metropolitan, share this impression that he then and there wrote off to Oxford and entreated that an effort might be made, analogous to that of Cambridge in their hopeful Delhi Mission, to send out university men with the special object of working among the students of the University of Calcutta. Such was the origin of the Oxford Mission to Calcutta; and it must ever be a matter of deep thankfulness that it began its work in the Episcopate and under the encouragement of Bishop Johnson, whose wise and unfailing sympathy guided it through many difficulties, whose truly catholic mind was able to conceive a great idea of what such a mission could do, and who watched over it with a most generous and ungrudging love.

It is worthy of note that the idea of the special character of the Mission—that of a brotherhood living under a definite but simple rule of life—was

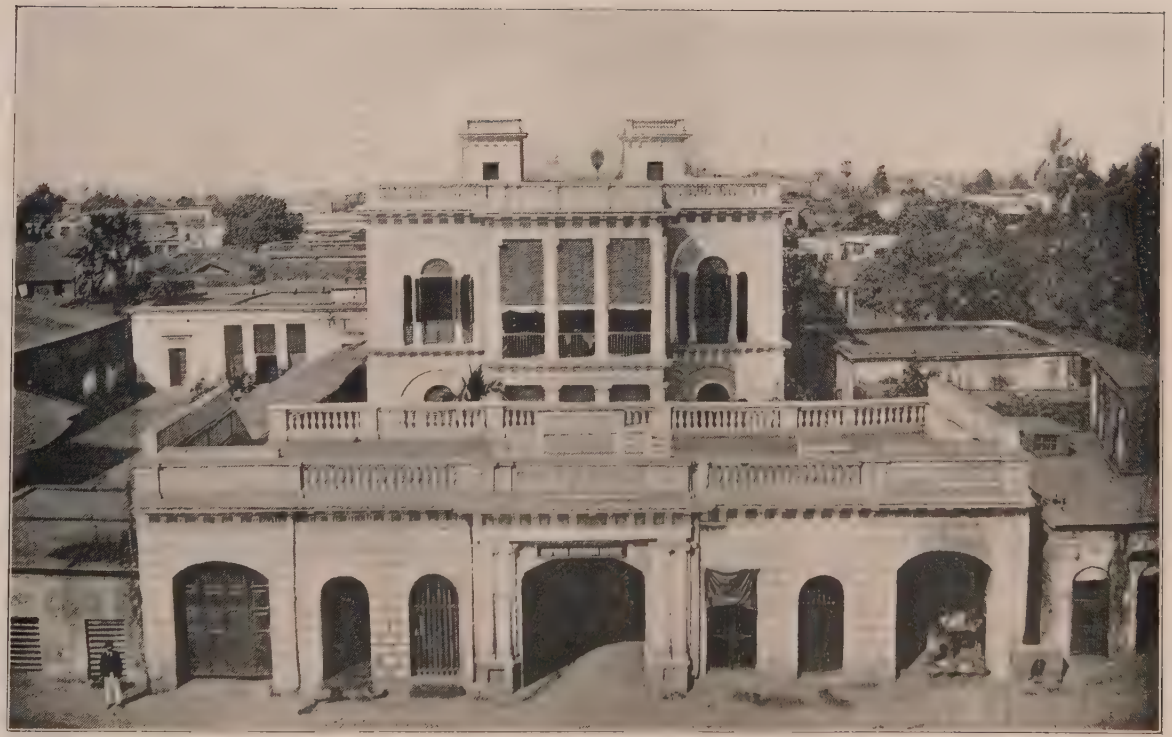
largely due to an influence which came from India. Bishop Douglass, of Bombay, had, not long before, published his famous charge, urging the need of men and women organised in some form of the religious life for the work of Indian missions. This charge had moved many in England very deeply; and when the idea of an Oxford Mission to Calcutta took shape, it was determined that it should go as a community of men, bound indeed by no life vows, but united by devotion to a common work and obedience to a common rule of life, with the special aim of setting an example of regular Christian devotion by the maintenance of frequent common services. From the first, two main principles have been kept in view:

1. That the Mission should be free to develop its work as experience and circumstances might direct.
2. That the members of the Mission should form a religious brotherhood under a rule definite enough to give real strength and support to the spiritual life, and yet sufficiently elastic to enable the community to undertake work of very various kinds.

On these two principles the Mission has rested from the first, and experience has amply proved the wisdom of the course which has been adopted.

There was one other influence at work, which was alluded to by Bishop King in a speech which he made at the annual meeting of the Oxford Mission in 1885. "I think," he said, "one of the strongest influences which urged this Mission forward was the intellectual pressure and trouble which were round about us at Oxford at that time, when men were comparing different kinds of religion, and almost feeling bound in freedom of thought to say, 'Let us look it fairly in the face. If these old Indian philosophic religions are better than we thought, let us be brave, let us admit the truth.'" It was this intellectual pressure, this desire to investigate the great Indian religious systems, and to place them in their right relation to the Christian faith, which the bishop states were among the motives which led the first members of the Mission to offer themselves for the work.

The four graduates who formed the first members of the Oxford Mission were the Rev. Edward Francis Willis, M.A., of Balliol College, and Vice-Principal of Cuddesden Theological College; the Rev. Ernest Faulkner Brown, M.A., scholar of Trinity College, and the Rev. Wilfrid Bird Hornby, M.A., of Brasenose College, both curates of St. Margaret's, Anfield, Liverpool; and the Rev. Marsham Frederick Argles, Fellow of St. John's College, and Principal



THE OXFORD MISSION HOUSE, BOW BAZAAR.

[*To face p.* 5.

of St. Stephen's House, Oxford. Of these, the first three, after a farewell service in the cathedral at Christ Church, at which the Bishop of Oxford gave them his benediction, sailed from Liverpool on October 30th, 1880, in the s.s. *Vega*—a vessel belonging to the Star Line running between Liverpool and Calcutta. With them went also a young layman, Edwin Berryman, who had been a page-boy at Cuddesden, and now as a printer offered his services for a time to the Mission, to take charge of the printing-press which Mr. Willis took out with him. While he was with the Mission he proved himself a most valuable helper, especially at the time of Mr. Willis' illness, during which the entire management and responsibility of the work connected with the press rested upon him. Mr. Argles, the fourth priest who had offered for the work, was unable to leave Oxford at this time, and it was arranged that he should join them in the October of the following year. They reached Calcutta on December 2nd, and received a very hearty welcome from the Bishop and from the clergy generally, as well as an address of welcome from the members of the Brahmo Somaj. A house had been provided for them by the Bishop in Bow Bazaar, a street which practically divides the English and the native portion of Calcutta,

and which was within fairly easy access of both.

First impressions are not always very trustworthy, but they are sometimes interesting, and the following is an extract from a letter written by one of the members of the Mission just after they had arrived :

"I should need to be a very clever sketcher to give you any idea of the strangeness of the sights which meet your eyes at every turn. They began as the *Vega* steamed slowly up the river Hoogli, when a crowd of little boats made for us from the shore, and we were soon boarded by swarms of dark red figures—most of them with the very smallest amount of clothing on, merely a cloth round their loins. It was five o'clock when we landed, and there was an hour before sunset, during which we were driven to our respective sleeping-places, for our house was not quite ready for us. It was a wonderful drive to my fresh eyes. Of course, I wanted to know the names of all the places—Government House, the post office, the cathedral, the Bishop's palace, etc. But far more interesting than the places were the people. The streets were crowded, but there was hardly a white face to be seen. There was John Chinaman, looking as though he had just stepped off his

tea-caddie ; there were Parsees, with a wonderful sort of tin-can arrangement on their heads ; there were the 'bheesties,' as the men are called who carry water in whole pig-skins, which look, when full, unpleasantly like the live animal ; there were men in all directions, (hardly any women,) sitting down comfortably on their heels, which is their favourite position ; there were weary and hot-looking 'coolies'—*i.e.* workmen ; there were spruce-looking young 'Babus,' clerks and natives with some education, who generally had some light floating muslin kind of stuff over their shoulders ; there were some fine, stately looking fellows, with blankets thrown over one shoulder, like the Italians ; there were policemen in clean white suits, black belts, bright buckles, and with red turbans on their heads ; there were little white boys coming home from school, in charge of brown 'bearers' only a little bigger than themselves ; and lastly, there were the Englishmen's carriages rolling proudly by, with their masters and mistresses sitting inside, dressed in the height of European fashion. In a few minutes over all this busy scene came down the darkness, leaving us to our own thoughts, to wonder when these thronging souls would come to see the truth and accept the gift which our Master has sent us forth to bring to them. How long, O Lord, how long ?"

The Mission House was formally opened on the festival of the Epiphany (January 6th, 1881). There was a special benedictory service, followed by a celebration of the Holy Eucharist, at which the Metropolitan was the celebrant, and at which the Rev. E. F. Willis, Rev. E. F. Brown, and Rev. W. B. Hornby were admitted members of the Oxford Brotherhood of St. Paul, and the Rev. E. F. Willis was installed as Superior. Thus, with the blessing of the Bishop, and with the sympathy and in the presence of a large number of clergy, the Mission began its work.

From the nature of the case this had to be at first somewhat tentative; the Mission had to feel its way, to see in what directions openings were offered, and to learn by experience the best methods of making use of them. The learning of Bengali took up, of course, at first, a good deal of their time; for though it is true that nearly all the educated men speak English, yet it is obvious that a knowledge of the native language is of the greatest importance for gaining any real insight into the difficulties and needs of the students, while the circumstances of the Mission were sure to bring it into contact with a large number of non-English-speaking people. Lectures, individual interviews, and an occasional "At Home" were among the ways in which the Mission

first began to get into touch with the educated Bengalis. A certain amount of printing, in the way of tracts and translations of books, was done by means of the printing-press. But the first permanent bit of work, curiously enough, sprang out of the relation of the Mission to the native Christians in Calcutta. These had for various reasons been left with very inadequate supervision, and it was evident from the first that any appeal to the non-Christians would be much weakened if those who were already baptised and belonged to the Church were presenting a very imperfect picture of Christian life. This the Bishop felt very strongly, and urged the Oxford Mission to undertake the charge of the native Christian congregation known as the "Cathedral Mission," and, by holding good native services and generally supervising the pastoral work among them, to raise the level of native Christian life. Though the native Christian congregations in Calcutta have always been in close touch with the Oxford Mission, and have received much help from it, yet they have not, with the exception of some brief periods, been actually under the charge of the Mission. But it was out of this connection that there grew the very important work of the establishment of a high-school for the sons of native Christian parents.

The arrival of the Rev. M. F. Argles in December, 1881, by increasing the number of the staff of the Mission to four, made it easier to undertake this work ; and the school was opened early in 1882 as a boarding-school for native Christian boys, with a view to educating them up to the entrance examination of the Calcutta University. The fees charged were only ten rupees a month ; but even that proved too great an expense for many of the parents, more especially the pastors, whose sons it was particularly desired to attract. Mr. Willis therefore made an appeal to friends at home to form a scholarship fund to pay the fees of deserving boys. This appeal was cordially taken up, and the fund so established has been maintained ever since.

The opening of a school for native Christian boys might seem at first sight somewhat of a departure from the primary aim of the Mission—namely direct missionary work among the students ; but the members of the Mission, and others who had had considerable experience of the mission field in India, all agreed that not only did the school not interfere with missionary work, but was, on the contrary, a very real help to it : and this for two reasons—first, because a sound and thoroughly Christian education would materially raise the standard of Christian life in Calcutta ; and secondly, because the school

afforded the means of laying the foundation of one of the greatest wants of the Church in India—a well-trained native ministry. There was not, it must be remembered, at this time a single Christian boarding-school for boys in Calcutta, and the want of such a school was seen in the comparison of the influence of native Christianity in Calcutta and in south India. A Hindu critic in Calcutta, who was not unfriendly to the Christian religion, said that "the native Christians raised no ripple on the surface of Hindu society"; whereas in southern India, where scarcely any mission is without its boarding-school for boys and girls, it is the evidence of the Hindus themselves that the native Christians, belonging for the most part to low castes, are winning their way to a leading position in the community, equal, if not superior, to that of the Brahmans.

Here, perhaps, is the place to mention an effort which, at the suggestion of Mr. Hornby, (now Bishop Hornby,) the Mission made in another direction—that of promoting Christian unity. Arrangements were made for holding periodical meetings, at the Oxford Mission House, of Nonconformist ministers and others, for the discussion of "burning questions." These meetings did not perhaps realise all that was hoped, but at least they afforded an opportunity

for remedying misconceptions, and were an attempt on the part of the members of the Mission to do what they could to promote the great object of unity.

Thus at the end of 1882, in rather less than two years after the arrival of the first brethren, the work of the Mission was beginning to assume definite shape, and the Superior and his fellow-workers were beginning to see something of the lines on which they might hope to develop the work in the future, and were already turning their minds to the question of permanent and enlarged buildings. In fact, the growth of the school necessitated the hiring of another house close by that which was occupied by the Mission, the rent of which the Bishop of Calcutta still continued very generously to pay.

All that had hitherto been done with regard to the constitution of the Brotherhood had been provisional. But the experience of two years had shown that the rule and constitution had worked satisfactorily ; and it was therefore with a good hope and glad heart that the community was formally constituted by the Bishop on the festival of the Epiphany, 1883. Only one change was made, and that was in respect of the name, which was altered from that of St. Paul to that of the Epiphany—a name which, for obvious reasons, seemed especially

appropriate; and from this date the Mission has been known as the Brotherhood of the Epiphany.

But the year which had begun so hopefully was soon to bring a heavy cloud over the Mission. Mr. Argles had scarcely been twelve months in Calcutta when his health gave way, and he was ordered home for what, it was hoped, would be only a few months. But the illness was more serious than was supposed, and he died within a fortnight of his arrival in England. His loss was a very heavy one. His special gifts, the saintliness of his life, his keen enthusiasm for the work, took away from the Mission one who could ill be spared.

Mr. Gore, in an article in the *Guardian*, speaking of his death said:

"The Church of England, from the point of view of her own apparent needs, has reason to deplore deeply the untimely loss of the Rev. Marsham Frederick Argles. We have not too many men who combine with intelligence and ability an unwavering and persistent strength of conviction and purpose. The words from the lesson in the Burial Office, 'stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord,' are the best description of his character. He was pre-eminently simple, gentle, truthful, and at all times rigorously obedient to conscience. In faith and

practice wholly catholic, he seemed to give himself, specially among Christian duties, to the cultivation of prayer and fasting. Wherever he was, he was for ever diffusing around him an atmosphere of steadiness, patience, and happiness; he was intolerant of nothing but sin, and indolence or unhopefulness in Christians. He was full of an affection, strong and deep rather than demonstrative. Such he was, and so he grew without check from his first coming up to Oxford; and so there was steadily developed and matured in him that temper of cheerful discipline which made a 'religious' life seem natural to him, and that vocation to missionary work, the first consciousness of which dated from his boyhood. To this vocation he responded so loyally that it would have been, as he said just before he left England, 'a greater self-denial to him to stay at home than to go to India'; and to it he finally sacrificed his life. His friends would agree that they have never known a character which it is more easy to think of in the tranquil waiting state of Paradise."

Hardly had this blow fallen, coming as it did so unexpectedly, than the Mission received another. In the summer of the same year the health of the Superior broke down. He, too, had to return home, and, though he lived till 1898, his illness was such

REV. E. F. WILLIS. [*To face p.* 15.

(First Superior of the Oxford Mission.)

that he was unable to return to India, and, indeed, was incapacitated for further work of any kind. It was the old story, the story of overwork; of one who, with untiring energy and ceaseless enthusiasm, overrated his physical strength and simply wore himself out.

Writing shortly after his death, Bishop Hornby said:

"At this moment it almost startles me to think of that marvellous capacity for work, that ceaseless activity, until the delicate machinery of the mind at last gave way. Let me think of some of the occupations of his *daily* life in the short two and a half years that limited his period of work. The management of a large Indian household, every detail of which was submitted to himself; the preparation of lectures to educated Hindus; the preaching to European or native congregations; the learning of the Bengali language, in which he was able to preach more or less intelligibly at the end of a year, and *that* a language which the Bengalis themselves would not allow that any European had really mastered. Then came the daily superintendence of the boys' boarding-school, some thirty little boys, children of the Bengali Christian parents. To all this were added the ceaseless interruptions—visits from native

Christian gentlemen, visits from native students at the University of Calcutta, and, as if this were not enough, the editing of the *Indian Churchman* and superintendence of the printing-press, which employed some sixteen native printers, with an English boy called Berryman as acting sub-manager, and the revising of all proofs, which he did himself.

"Why did we not relieve him of some of his work? He was a difficult man to relieve. He himself was unconscious of the necessity for any relief. He resigned, indeed, the direct control of the school, towards the end of the second year, to Ernest Brown, but I never recollect his asking for help in any of his own special work till the week before his actual breakdown. The impression on my own mind is that Willis had the misfortune to be able to do *everything* better than ordinary people could do any *one* thing. Contemporaries at Cuddesden will recall hours in the chapel, the lecture-room, and the *fives court*! It always, therefore, seemed useless to ask to do for him what we knew he could do better himself.

"As one looks back to the early years of the Oxford Mission life in Calcutta, one concludes that Willis was unfitted by the very variety of his own attainments to be the Superior of a great undertaking. He would have done better work himself,

and better work would have been got out of the other members of the Mission, if we had been under the control of a man who had a truer understanding of the limits of human endurance in a climate like Calcutta, where for three months of the year the thermometer stands at 102 degrees in the shade. But wherever his weakness lay, Willis set to all Cuddesden men a noble example of what can be done in a short time; possibly, too, of what can *not* be done—for the bow was stretched till at last it broke."

The loss of Mr. Willis and of Mr. Argles would have been serious at any time; they were specially so when the Mission was, as it were, still in its childhood, and when the development of the work required an increasing and not a diminishing staff. One great encouragement had been the arrival of the Rev. Philip Samuel Smith, Fellow of St. Augustine's College, Canterbury, and late scholar of University College, Oxford. Of Mr. Smith's work something will be said later on; it will be enough here to say that with an enthusiasm which nothing could quench he brought to the service of the Mission unique gifts for dealing with the students of the University—those, that is, towards whom the aim of the Mission was specially directed.

But even with the accession of Mr. Smith the

Mission was very much under-manned, and it was therefore with a real sense of thankfulness that they received the news that the Rev. Charles Gore, who had succeeded Mr. Willis as Vice-Principal of Cuddesden, had offered to spend the first nine months of 1894 with the Mission in Calcutta. He arrived in January, accompanied by Mr. Peach, who also came as a visitor. Their arrival, in the words of Mr. Hornby, was like "a relief of a garrison," so great had been the strain upon the staff. Another event which took place in this year, and which was eventually to have the greatest influence on the work of the Mission, was the appointment of the Rev. Henry Whitehead,[1] Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, to the post of Principal of Bishop's College, Calcutta.

Meantime the general work of the Mission had been maintained. The school continued to increase, and in April, 1883, had reached a total of twenty-five. Lectures, interviews, and visits kept up and widened the influence of the Mission among the students and educated Bengalis; and a good deal of intercourse took place at this time between the members of the Mission and the Brahmo Somaj, whose leader was Keshub Chunder Sen. But perhaps one of the most important developments of the work in this

[1] Consecrated Bishop of Madras June, 1899.

year was the starting of the *Epiphany*—a weekly paper, edited by the members of the Mission, for the discussion of religious, literary, and social topics, and written specially for the university students. It was in the days when the Mission was feeling most keenly the loss of Mr. Willis and Mr. Argles, that Mr. Smith, with characteristic hopefulness, suggested the starting of something new, and the *Epiphany* was the result. It has been carried on continuously since its first publication, and has proved an instrument of increasing usefulness. It has obtained a recognised place in Calcutta, and is frequently referred to by the native press; while by means of the "Answers to enquirers" which it gives, it affords an opportunity for spreading an immense amount of information about Christianity, and, what is not less important, for correcting a still greater amount of misconception. It was at first published at the nominal price of a farthing, but has since been made free, and has now a circulation of about five thousand copies a week. As most of the copies are each read by two or three people at least, this means that the paper is read every week by about ten or twelve thousand non-Christians. Nor is its influence confined to Calcutta; it goes to many other parts of India, as well as to Burmah and Ceylon, and the

Mission is constantly receiving testimonies from various sources as to its usefulness for missionary work. "It is certainly," wrote the Superior of the Mission, in 1897, "now a most valuable organ, and enables the Mission to influence a large number of educated Hindus in different parts of India more effectually than could be done by isolated lectures. For a lecture must of necessity be more or less an effort by itself; but the value of the *Epiphany* lies in the steady persistence with which it teaches week by week." As Mr. Nitya Gopal Mukerji, a Bengali Christian gentleman, said at the annual meeting of 1885, "The *Epiphany* is about the only Christian periodical known to non-Christians, and it is much appreciated on account of its tone of earnestness, its fairness of criticism, the regard it manifests for non-Christian religious systems, and its spirit of toleration, as well as its very able editorship."

But perhaps the most striking testimony to its influence was an article published last year (1898) in the *Statesman*, one of the leading daily papers in Calcutta. "The correspondence columns of the *Epiphany*," says the writer, "from week to week reveal all manner of religious speculation, of anxious enquiry, of bewildered thought. Some may regard it as too large a pretension for that journal to undertake to 'answer all questions respecting

religion' ; but doubtless the limitation is implied—to the extent of the light afforded by the Christian revelation. However that may be, it is impossible not to admire the fearlessness with which objections are met and the most difficult problems faced. Whether one can always agree with the editor or not, it is undeniable that he burkes nothing. And amid a perfect babel of voices, which the correspondence columns echo, often involving questions which are silly or impertinent, the editor preserves unfailing tact and courtesy ; his patience is unwearied, and he presents an example of the Christian spirit which the missionary body as a whole might well emulate in dealing with the youth of India. Of course the *Epiphany* is in touch with the modern scientific spirit of enquiry, and abreast of the historical problems which start up everywhere in connection with the old religions and the new forms of defence put forth on behalf of Hinduism and Buddhism. The Oxford Brothers are well versed in Hindu literature and philosophy, and not appalled by the Buddhist remains so diligently raked up everywhere. Every missionary society, we believe, has desired, at different times and in divers ways, to meet the religious wants of the educated youth of India, and has attempted to do so with more or less result. But the conspicuous

success of the Oxford Mission in this respect is evidenced by the regular appearance of the *Epiphany*—which has now reached its fifteenth year of publication—and by the unfailing interest which English-speaking natives take in it, as its columns clearly show."

The year 1884 was one of considerable anxiety. Mr. Hornby, who had originally joined the Mission for three years, and who had stayed longer than that time, was compelled to return to England in February, leaving Mr. Brown and Mr. Smith alone; and in consequence of Mr. Willis' illness, the Mission was without a Superior. Mr. Gore's presence for the first nine months of the year was an enormous help and encouragement; and in Mr. Whitehead, the new Principal of Bishop's College, the Mission found a very warm friend and helper. When it became certain that Mr. Willis would never be able to return, the Brethren begged the Bishop of Calcutta to sanction his resignation, and to grant a dispensation for the election of a new Superior, without the year's probation required by the constitution. This the Bishop did, and the Brethren anxiously awaited the arrival of Mr. Townsend, who had been chosen for that post. Meantime the work was carried on, and indeed in one way extended, by lectures which were given at

Patna and Dacca, at both of which towns there are a large number of students. From time to time since then the Mission has paid occasional visits to these two places; and in Patna, especially, it would wish to establish a permanent branch house, if ever the numbers of the staff would allow of its so doing. Out of Calcutta the students are much less affected by the many influences, especially political, which militate against Christianity; they are, too, in some ways, more simple-minded and open to conviction.

The character of the work, and the conditions under which it is done, preclude any great eventfulness, and a year of valuable and most real work often affords little or no material for the chronicler. This is true about the year 1884; but some idea as to the effect the Mission was already producing is shown by the following extract from a letter written by Mr. Gore after his arrival in Calcutta:

"I have been," he says, "a good deal impressed with manifold testimonies to the value of their work, specially the great work of edification among the native Christians. 'They have put a new spirit in us,' they say. They are deeply impressed with their simple love, their utter absence of superiority, and their genuine brotherliness. They have wonderfully prepared the way for Whitehead

at Bishop's College ; and you would have gone into ecstasies over a guild of native Christians that I talked to this morning at the college. Then they have done excellent good work in opening out towards the native Babus : they feel them such friends. This is over and above the actual conversions they have helped in. This latter work has been mainly that of Argles and Philip Smith. Brown is full of courage, zeal, and love. The native Christians talk much about Hornby. So far, then, there is a wonderful deal to encourage. It would be the joy of my heart to stay, in a way. We must get some men. It wants love much more than great ability. There is splendid work for anybody who will come."

And again, on his return to England, at the annual meeting at Oxford, in February, 1885, he said :

"The work has been successful. The impression of brotherhood which the Oxford Mission has created is most remarkable. You cannot talk to the native Christians without feeling this, that even if the Oxford Mission had done nothing else than create, for the first time, a sense of brotherhood and fellow-feeling amongst them, they would have done an immense thing ; and I do not think you can exaggerate how much they have done to raise

the tone amongst the best native Christians, and not least among the native Christian clergy."

Mr. N. G. Mukerji, whose witness as regards the influence of the *Epiphany* has been already mentioned, and who spoke at the same meeting, also bore eloquent testimony to the value of the Mission. He drew special attention to the remarkable way in which the Brethren of the Mission had made themselves known to non-Christians in Calcutta, and how they had been largely instrumental in drawing out the sympathy of the European community for missionary work. He also warmly corroborated all that Mr. Gore had said as to what the Mission had done for the native Christian community. We mention this because, as we have said, the character of the work deprives it often of any special incidents, and so the very great importance and value of what is being done is apt to be overlooked.

But the strain of the past year had been a heavy one, and the Oxford committee, in their annual report, expressed their great thankfulness to Mr. Brown and Mr. Smith for the unflinching courage and devotion with which they had carried on the work. The friends of the Mission in Calcutta also took the opportunity of the annual festival of the Brotherhood, which was held as

usual at the feast of the Epiphany, to manifest their sympathy and interest by coming in much larger numbers than usual. A further and still greater encouragement came in the arrival of the Rev. Charles William Townsend, of Keble College, Oxford, and Vice-Principal of Salisbury Theological College; and the Rev. Charles Henley Walker, of Oriel College, Oxford, and curate of Dorchester, Oxon, who had offered themselves for the work of the Mission. They had left England in October, and reached Calcutta on November 14th, 1885, where they received a very warm and hearty welcome, the boys of the school especially decorating the house for the occasion.

CHAPTER II.

TROUBLED TIMES.

1886—1889.

"One of the chief lessons of my life has been, that what seems most hindering is most helpful."

WITH the year 1886 began what may be termed the second period of the work of the Mission. This was marked in Calcutta by the removal of the centre of the Mission from Bow Bazaar to the more immediate neighbourhood of the students' quarter of the city; and at home by the appointment of Miss Murray as General Secretary, a work at the service of which she placed, for the next ten years, her unrivalled energy and self-devotion. It is to her more than any one that the Mission owes the large and enthusiastic organisation at home, without which means could not, humanly speaking, have been found for supporting and extending the work in Calcutta, which was soon to grow so largely. To a zeal which never tired Miss Murray added a hope and faith which knew no discouragement; and it is not too much to say

that to her, more than to any one, except perhaps the Bishop of Lincoln, Mr. Whitehead, and Mr. Brown, does the Mission owe the position and prosperity which it has to-day.

Mr. Townsend, who, as we have said, had come out to take the place of Mr. Willis, was installed as Superior on the festival of the Epiphany by the Bishop of Calcutta, and the next few months were mainly occupied with the negotiations for the new house. For some time it had been felt that the house in Bow Bazaar was practically too far from where the students lived to enable the Mission to have that close touch with them which they desired, and they had consequently been hoping for an opportunity of getting a house nearer to the students' quarter, which lies, roughly speaking, within the square formed by Machooa Bazaar Street, Amherst Street, Beadon Street, and Chitpore Road.

Hitherto, one difficulty with regard to the move had been the High School. This could not well be left at Bow Bazaar, and it was impossible to find a suitable house with a playground in the native quarter of the city. But just at this time the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, which wished to have a similar school in connection with its work at Bishop's College, offered to build a house in the college compound, and to allow

the Mission to use it for its school. This offer was gladly accepted, and the boys of the Oxford Mission High School migrated to the new house at Bishop's College, where they have remained ever since. The school-house remained the property of the Society, the head-master and the expenses of the school being provided by the Mission. Mr. Brown, whose child the school had practically been from the first, continued in charge when they moved into their new home. In a letter written for the *Quarterly Paper* of the Mission he gives an account of the ordinary routine of the school life and work :

"We begin the day at the High School with prime at six, in Bengali, after which the boys go to preparation till half-past eight, and then, after a short interval, they have breakfast. Their dining-room is not very luxurious or æsthetic. It is a detached building, consisting of one hall, about thirty feet by ten, quite innocent of furniture—for the boys do not eat sitting on chairs and at tables ; they simply sit on strips of matting which are laid on the floor, and eat with their plates on the ground before them. After breakfast comes a short interval, and then they go into school at ten minutes past ten, and in school they stay till four, except for an interval of one hour, from one to two. At four we have Bengali evensong for the smaller boys

in the college chapel, together with the boys of the S.P.G. Boarding-School. This is followed at half-past four by evensong for the college students and the elder boys of the school. Then comes foot-ball or gymnastics till half-past six, when they dine. After dinner they have preparation till compline, at a quarter to nine, and then bed. The little boys go to bed at eight. We have fixed days for foot-ball, Mondays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, when all boys must turn out, unless disabled. On Tuesdays and Fridays they get lessons in gymnastics for a part of the evening. The boys have lately developed a fondness for tennis, and indeed some of them have made considerable progress in the game.

"As to holidays, we have the usual vacations every year, and we have half-holidays on all saints' days and Saturdays, when we close work at one and have no preparation at night. On Sundays the boys attend an English service in the college chapel, and a Bengali one in the cathedral in the morning; *i.e.* they go to Holy Communion and mattins every Sunday in the chapel and cathedral alternately. On Sunday afternoons they attend Bengali evensong at the cathedral at four. Besides these services, the elder boys go to the celebration of the Holy Eucharist on saints' days in the college

chapel, and we have Bengali mattins for all afterwards at ten : on these days and on Sundays prime is not said.

"This is the picture of the regular routine of the school. Of course now and then we have little incidents which emerge from the ordinary monotonous round ; such a one has just taken place, namely the holding of the University examination, in which we take a great interest this year, for we have sent in two boys for the entrance or matriculation examination. The boys themselves are confident of their success ; the teachers entertain doubts. Let us hope that the scholars may prove the more competent judges of their own cases. After matriculating from the school, a boy, if he wishes to continue his studies, would probably go on to Bishop's College. We gave the college two boys last year, and will probably give them these two if they get through their examination."

Of the value of the school Mr. Townsend wrote soon after his arrival, "I am fully convinced that it is among the most solid work that the Mission is doing" ; and the Bishop, who still continued his munificent contributions to the funds of the Mission, was equally warm in his praise of the influence which the school was exerting. It is perhaps a small but a satisfactory incident that during the

year 1886 the boys of the school subscribed or collected more than fifty rupees for the support of an orphan in one of the orphanages in southern India.

Two benefactions have been given to the school, one by some Bengali friends of Mr. Argles, who presented to the Mission, through Mr. M. L. Sandel, the sum of one hundred and thirty rupees to found an "Argles memorial prize"; and the other was received in 1888, when, on the retirement of Archdeacon Atlay, his numerous friends in Calcutta, desirous to preserve some memorial of him, subscribed a sum of four thousand three hundred rupees for that purpose; and he, with the generosity which always characterised him, desired that the memorial should be nothing personal, but should form a fund for maintaining a scholar at the High School.

Having thus provided for the school, the Mission was free to move as soon as a house could be found. The one finally decided upon was at 99, Muktaram Babu Street, which as to situation and size seemed to be fairly suitable. The purchase—always a long and difficult business in India—was completed with the help of Mr. Sandel, and the necessary funds were advanced for the time by the liberality of the Archdeacon of Calcutta. The formal entry into the new quarters was made early on the

THE OXFORD MISSION HOUSE, MUKTARAM BABU STREET.

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morning of June 17th, 1886, when the clergy and choir went round the house in procession ; prayers were said in the principal rooms, and the first Holy Eucharist was offered, in Bengali, in the chapel.

The house was the ordinary house of a well-to-do Hindu gentleman, built round two quadrangles, the inner one of which had been used as the Zenana or ladies' part of the house. Though covering a good deal of ground and containing a large number of rooms, the rooms themselves were small and low, conditions which made them trying for a European to live in. The one large central room was used for the chapel, and made as bright and devotional as possible by means of the gifts of many kind friends. The neighbourhood was of course very different from that of Bow Bazaar, being entirely in the native part of the city, where the dirt, the smells, and the noise of native life make life for the European very trying, not only during the day, but often at night as well.

"Our street," writes a member of the Mission "is an odd jumble of squalor and splendour. There are two towering mansions just opposite us, inhabitated by some very wealthy Babus and their joint families, all living together in the Indian style. The garden in front of the larger is decorated with

ridiculous stucco statues in the Greek style, and is full of cranes, emus, and other queer bipeds. On two sides our Mission House is surrounded with 'Busti,' or native huts—mud and straw shanties roofed with tiles. One is directly under my bedroom; and the family who inhabit it are rather amusing, especially when they have 'jars,' which is not unfrequently. To hear a Bengali woman vociferate in voluble Billingsgate, at about one hundred words in a breath is astonishing. Occasionally they are 'at home with music,' which is rather trying, as they keep it up till long after midnight. The instrumental part is of the tom-tom order, and the vocal very nasal, with long shakes. The songs are generally religious—hymns to Rama and Krishna. One likes it for a little, but it is apt to get monotonous."

It was here then in June, 1886, that the Mission cheerfully established itself, and the following extract from a letter written soon after by Mr. Townsend shows that they were very well satisfied with their choice:

"We have now been here long enough to confirm the hope with which we came into this part of Calcutta. We come into increasingly frequent contact with people like the leaders of the Brahmo Somaj, whom we reached only with diffi-

culty from Bow Bazaar, and students can visit us without the long walk which in many instances was the condition of an interview. In fact, we get as much individual intercourse as we have time for. I much wish it were possible to spend more time in visits to Hindu houses. Our acquaintance with the neighbours is extending, and might go on more rapidly if it were possible to get one's feet outside the door more frequently. But indeed we may well consider that the establishment of a Christian mission in this quarter, in a Hindu house, is itself an encouraging and significant achievement."

The central event of this year, and one which brought a heavy sorrow and loss upon the Mission, was the death of Mr. Philip Smith. Never very strong, he knew when he offered himself for the work of the Mission that he had not many years to live; but as he characteristically said, India was as good a country to die in as any other. It was, then, with this knowledge, that he went to India to give what years were granted to him to a work, the call to which had been steadily growing and deepening within him. Once at Calcutta he never spared himself, but threw his whole energy and soul into the work before him, devoting himself with a special zeal, and with a unique power, to the service of the University students, and by his sympathy,

self-devotion, and love for them winning in the short space of little more than three years a wonderful position among them. Nor was it the students alone who felt the influence of his character. Every one who came in contact with him was drawn towards him; and the large and reverent crowd which attended his funeral, composed of English and Bengalis, Christians and non-Christians, of all shades of opinion, testified to the regard in which he was held. When the present writer was in Calcutta in 1893 his name was still remembered among the students with affection and respect. It was largely with money lent by Mr. Smith that the house in Muktaram Babu Street was bought, and in accordance with his expressed desire his brother at his death made over the property to the Mission. But perhaps a still greater gift was his grave, which, as Mr. Townsend wrote, is an abiding pledge of the continuance of the work of the Mission.

Of the many tributes which were paid to Mr. Smith's work, none was more true or happy than that of Sir William Hunter, K.C.S.I., Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University, who spoke of what Mr. Smith's life and influence had been, at the annual meeting of the Mission, at Oxford, in May, 1888:

"I should like here to say a few words about one of the Oxford brethren lately deceased. Some of you here knew Philip Smith. He was a man, although he died at thirty-three, whose influence will last for many years. Many of his friends have regretted his early decease. But if you adopt the principle which he adopted, the principle of renunciation of this world, you will rather rejoice in a death which carried out the purpose for which he lived. There has been no event in the history of the Mission which so powerfully impressed the native mind as the calm ending of this one young Oxford scholar, who gave up his life to his duty. If you will allow me, I should like to read a few comments made at the time of his death by native newspapers—newspapers written and edited by non-Christians of various Indian beliefs. One of them says: 'We knew him not only as a preacher of Christianity, but also as a fellow-worker in every noble cause calculated to uplift the people. To our young men he was a friend and counsellor in all their needs.' Another of them, the editor of a Bengali political paper, writes: 'His courtesy to all men, high and low, his attention to boys and children, his sympathy with the distressed, his active charity, will be remembered by all who knew him.'

"The following sentences, which are translated from a journal written in the Bengali language, bear a still stronger testimony to his worth: 'Uncompromising Christian though he was, he mixed freely with all sorts of people, conversed with them on religious topics, whatever might be their colour or their creed. Crowds of ragged and dirty boys would gather round him in the streets, and pull his clothes or plague him in other ways, but he would kindly take them up and kiss them.' Now think what this means. A white man walks through the Calcutta streets, a scholar and a gentleman, and poor boys of different religion and race have such confidence in him that they press round him and cling to the skirts of his garment, and ask him to kiss them. Is there not a similar picture handed down from old times? Philip Smith really made the Hindus in Calcutta understand that the old narrative was a true narrative, and that Christianity is as living to-day as it was in Palestine eighteen centuries ago."

As some compensation for this heavy loss, the year 1888 brought a welcome accession to the staff of the Mission, in the person of the Rev. Maurice Bell, of Hertford College, Oxford, who left England in December, 1887, and reached Calcutta on the eve of the festival of the Epiphany, thus adding

an extra element of gladness to what is always a day of great happiness to the Mission. Unfortunately, a few months showed that the climate of Calcutta was hopeless for Mr. Bell, and to his own and the Brethren's great regret he was ordered by the doctor to return to England.

Two other priests had meanwhile offered themselves to the Mission: the Rev. James Legard Peach, of Trinity College, Cambridge, who, it will be remembered, had, while a layman, come out as a visitor to Calcutta with Mr. Gore in 1884; and the Rev. Halhed Sydney Moore, of Keble College, Oxford, curate to Mr. Hornby, Vicar of St. Columba, Sunderland, one of the first members of the Mission. They both arrived in November, 1888. The close of the year therefore saw the Mission with a staff of five priests, and with the promise of a sixth in 1889 in the person of the Rev. Walter Paul Grey Field, formerly scholar of Keble College, Oxford, and curate of St. John the Divine, Kennington, who offered to take Mr. Bell's place. This was a larger number than had been reached before, but was yet none too large for the work which was ready to be done.

Of the daily life at the Mission House at this time the following account, written by Mr. Brown in 1889, gives a very good idea; and we may add

that in its main features it represents the ordinary daily life of the Mission as it is to-day :

" One day is indeed very like another at the Mission House, and to describe an average day will be to set before you a very large part of our life. Well then, the day begins with prime at six ; and in the tropics the variation between the hours of sunrise and of sunset in different parts of the year is so small that we find it most convenient to keep to the same time-table all the year round. Prime is followed by the Holy Communion (daily), and most days of the week one of us goes to celebrate for the Sisters at the Canning Home. This is followed by that cup of tea which goes by the name of chota hazari, 'the little breakfast,' which is so essential to one's life that without it we are flabby, nerveless organisms, useless for any task either spiritual or bodily. It is humiliating to be such a victim to external conditions ; but though I think I may count myself as strong as most Anglo-Indians, I can never forego my chota hazari without paying for the omission by a headache for the rest of the day. Meditation, matins, and terce then occupy us till breakfast, at 9.30. At breakfast a book is read ; and as a general rule during the earlier part of the day, till sext, silence is observed, except in so far as our work

requires it to be broken. After breakfast there are household duties to be attended to and letters to be answered. One has to go to teach at the school of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel at Howrah, another probably to visit the school for poor boys which a Hindu Pundit has established in our lecture-room. Our Rule requires an hour's study of the Bible every day; and if after this has been done there is any part of the morning remaining, it is devoted to private reading or to Bengali lessons. Sext is said at twelve. Tiffin is at one, a book being read as at breakfast. The interval till none, at 2.45, is a time of recreation, and is spent in talk, reading the papers, and possibly (if it be very hot) in a little gentle and refreshing slumber.

"After none the Babus begin to come. The house is open to them at all times; but they consult both their own convenience and ours by coming in the afternoon and evening. They are mostly of the student class, or are young clerks in offices; but here and there a grey head may be seen amongst them. Most afternoons there is a pretty constant stream of them coming in to use the reading-room, to borrow books, to talk, or to 'read Bible,' as they express it; and our aim is to draft them off to our own rooms by ones or twos—seldom

more at a time—and then learn from them their thoughts, their difficulties, their doubts; to teach them the great truths of the faith, and to press home to their consciences those moral and spiritual facts which they are generally willing enough to recognise intellectually. This is our main work; and we look upon all our classes, lectures, debates, 'at homes,' and mission services—into all of which we launch out occasionally—as leading up to this. One would think that one or two such interviews, when one gets a man face to face, and can speak to him heart to heart and soul to soul, would make a great impression; but that is just where the difference comes in between a Bengali and an Englishman. An Englishman will not readily open his mouth on a religious subject, but if he does he means it. The Bengali is always ready to talk about religion—nothing is easier than to get him onto a religious subject; but then one discovers, to one's great disappointment, that his interest in it is merely intellectual and superficial, and that nothing is further from his thoughts than to accept any responsibility for such truth as he is led to acknowledge. There are those that have gone on visiting us actually from the time when the Mission was first started, and yet it would be hard to affirm that they had made the smallest progress towards

INTERIOR OF THE MISSION HOUSE IN MUKTARAM BABU STREET, WITH THE MEMBERS OF THE OXFORD MISSION AND BOYS OF THE OXFORD MISSION HIGH SCHOOL.

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the truth. However, the usual course is for these to drop off after a time. Of course, there are others who make real advance; some whose consciences are aroused, whose hearts are touched, and who emerge at last from the stage of enquirers into that of catechumens. There are more, in whom the seed has really taken root, but its fruit will not be visible for many years. There have been several instances lately in Calcutta of old men being baptised whose knowledge of Christianity began in their boyhood. There are more still who will never come to Holy Baptism at all, but whose lives will have been elevated by what they have learnt at the Mission House, and who will help to secure that recognition of duty and conscience which more than anything else is required as the '*Præparatio Evangelica*' in India.

"Our Babus generally depart to their own evening meal as it grows dark, and we then have evensong and dinner. After dinner there is often some meeting, which it is useful to attend; otherwise we go to bask in the air, which by this time has begun to blow cool, upon the roof—'to eat the wind,' according to the expressive Bengali idiom. Compline is at nine, and after it we generally find our way pretty quickly to bed. The great difficulty in India is to do an honest day's work, for without

having done very much I have often in the hot weather found myself so tired by night-time that I could not take the trouble to wind up my watch."

Outside the Mission House the Brethren occasionally preached in one of the many squares which were in the neighbourhood. That out-door preaching was not a method they very often used was not from any disparagement of that form of missionary work, for if rightly done it cannot be too highly spoken of. But Calcutta was well supplied with bazaar preachers; and the members of the Mission felt that the more individual work of lectures and interviews, of which they had as much as they could manage, was the special kind of work for which they were best fitted. Yet from time to time out-door preaching was undertaken, and the method was as follows: two would enter a square at 6 or 8.30 p.m., and after a private prayer together would walk slowly forward to the centre of the square, one of the two singing a hymn in his own language, Bengali or English. All kinds of people would gather round, including young boys and others whose knowledge of English was very limited; but a good number of educated men who take the air at that time would assemble. Sometimes there were a hundred or more of these, sometimes only twenty or a dozen, in which case

it was found best simply to converse. The address ended, there generally followed an invitation to visit the Mission House for enquiry, of which a few —a very few—availed themselves. At other times it was found a good thing to sit down in a public place and wait for some one to come and talk; the Brother so doing had seldom to wait long. There is no shyness in talking about religion in an Eastern, nor is there any difficulty in quickly getting into conversation with a complete stranger. As it was in the days of St. Paul at Athens, so it is very much to-day in Calcutta. The Bengali Babu, like the Athenian of old, is always ready to hear some new thing and to discuss all the problems of philosophy and religion with any one who will talk with him.

Another method of contact with the students, and one to which at this time the Mission devoted a good deal of attention, was attending, either as visitor or president, some of the various clubs, in the formation of which the Calcutta student seems to take so much delight. They are established in great numbers and for various purposes, mostly literary, moral, or religious. Athletics have not at present gained sufficient ground to be the basis of a club. Football, however, has latterly been taken up, and in 1894 there were one or two student

clubs, which if they did not produce very many players compared with the whole number of students, at least called forth a considerable and increasing interest among the young Bengalis. We do not remember any similar club for cricket—probably the game is too expensive for the large majority of the students, whose means are very limited. But athletics or games in any form are a new idea to the Calcutta student; and his conception of recreation still runs in the form of a debating and literary club for what he terms "religious and moral improvement."

Such a club was the "Home Club," which met once a week to read the Bible and discuss religious subjects. They invited Mr. Smith to preside at their meetings, and after his death one or other of the members of the Mission went in his stead. Another was named the "Society for the study of Christ," and was formed by some of the members of a much larger club, known as the "Concord Club," but was entirely independent of it. The Mission also organised a debating club, with the aim of discussing social and literary problems in a healthy moral atmosphere, and thus influencing for good the minds of those who might attend the debates. It reached one hundred and forty members, and had Sir W. W. Hunter as its patron.

But the clubs were chiefly useful as a means of contact with the students, and of getting to know them with a view to closer personal intercourse. It is here that the real work is mostly done, and here too that the difficulty of the work mainly lies. For the Western and Eastern minds are widely different. For many centuries they have been moving in different directions, until time seems to have raised an inexplicable barrier between them. Pantheism, which for ages has been the prevailing influence under which successive generations of Hindus have lived, has coloured every mental movement, has stamped itself deep upon their religious conviction, has dominated and affected almost every department of their daily life. We are apt to consider Pantheism as an extinct philosophy, revived in a modified form from time to time in some few European minds ; and it is well to remember that in India it is a living thing, the influence under which more than two hundred millions of men and women to-day direct their religious, mental, and social life.

We have spoken of it as a living thing, but a "dead thing" would be a truer phrase. Whatever attraction Pantheism may have to a mind which accepts it in a society permeated and dominated by Christianity, it is a very different thing when

seen in its effects in a society wholly under its influence. Death and not life, the darkening not the enlightening of the human conscience, the enslavement not the freedom of the human mind and will, are the unmistakable results. In the deep-rooted Pantheism of the Hindu, and the issues which it involves, lies one of the great difficulties of missionary work in India.[1] Wholly inconceivable to a Western mind is such a statement as the following, which was made in all seriousness by an educated Hindu. At a religious discussion at the Mission House on the "Life and Resurrection of our Lord," a distinguished member of the University of Oxford, who was staying with the Mission, had stated the arguments for believing that Jesus Christ was a real person, with a clearness and power of logic which seemed incontrovertible. A Hindu gentleman who was present rose at the close of the address and said: "It is not of the least consequence to me whether Jesus Christ was a real person or not. So long as I have the vision of the moral beauty which He sets before me, I do not care whether He lived or not!" It is this attitude of mind which is so bewildering, and which calls for such infinite patience. We go to them

[1] Some more detailed account of what modern Hinduism practically is will be found in the last chapter of this book.

with our Western training and our Western methods of reasoning, and we expect to carry all before us, but we find we cannot produce the slightest spark of conviction. It is only very slowly and by degrees that we learn the things which do make some sort of impression upon them, and find that they lie not so much in logical argument, or in historical reasoning, as in startling paradoxes and telling illustrations.

But beyond and behind this difficulty of mental attitude lies another and a deeper one—one which is above all else the result of Pantheism—namely, that absence of the deep moral sense which we know as *conscience*, and which in some form or other asserts itself in every European. A man within the sphere of Christendom may be ignorant of religion, ignorant even of Christianity, he may be sunk in every kind of degradation and vice,—yet deep down in his soul there is a clear and strong conviction of the difference between right and wrong. But this is very weak and sadly confused in the Hindu. The work, then, which the Mission has to do is largely the work of re-creating the moral sense, of recovering the idea of conscience, which for centuries has been buried beneath the deadening mass of Pantheism. This must be a slow work and an individual work; and though converts have from time to time been

baptised, the Mission has never been disheartened because they have as yet been few. It has realised the conditions under which alone any real and permanent results can be attained, and it is content to work and to wait.

The annual festival on the feast of the Epiphany, 1889, had found, as we have seen, the Mission fully established in Muktaram Babu Street, in a position better adapted for frequent and close intercourse with the students, and increased, by the arrival of Mr. Peach and Mr. Moore, to a greater strength than had been reached before: but this strength as regards the work at the Mission House was more apparent than real. In the spring of 1889 Mr. Brown started for a visit to England, after nine years of continuous and anxious work. This necessitated Mr. Peach taking up his residence at the High School, of which he took over the charge during Mr. Brown's absence; while Mr. Whitehead, who wished to bring Bishop's College into closer touch with the Mission, had asked that Mr. Walker might be lent to the college for a time to lecture to the students. This left practically only two resident members at the Mission House, the Superior (Mr. Townsend) and Mr. Moore.

It was soon after these arrangements were com-

pleted, and when the Mission seemed to be looking forward to a year of quiet and steady work, that a blow, heavier than any it had received before, fell upon it. Mr. Townsend felt obliged to resign his position as Superior, and to make his submission to the Church of Rome. As far as he could, he did everything which was possible to minimise the result of his action upon the Mission; but such a step on the part of the Superior could not fail to create, at least for a time, widespread and deep anxiety. It laid the Mission open to the charge that its teaching encouraged disloyalty to the English Church. But what appeared to be at the moment a grave disaster was turned into a victory by the courage and hopefulness, as well as by the unfaltering charity and faith, of those who remained. "We have lost," says Mr. Brown, speaking when the weight of the blow was still heavy upon them, "we have lost one who was the very best of Superiors—one who, by his own patience and persevering work, and by his humility and gentleness, not only ruled our community well, but endeared himself to the people amongst whom he worked, and was gaining a very great influence over them." "Surely," writes another member of this Mission, "we may look upon it as a great privilege to go through such a testing crisis; it will just show of

what stuff we are made, and whether the Divine blessing is on us or not. I think our existence as a Mission seems a miracle after all the losses we have had; but the analogy of our past is hopeful. . . . . Please let all our friends know that everything here will go on just exactly as before. Of course we are crippled, but absolutely nothing we can keep up is to be dropped." "As far as the band left without its head is concerned," wrote the Bishop, "all are brave, and feel that it is only a call to more devoted work." It was, as was well said in the annual report for that year, a time of anxiety, ready to verge towards discouragement, but it was checked from that and wholesomely rebuked by the courage and hopefulness of those who were working in Calcutta and who might most pardonably have been downhearted.

That the step which Mr. Townsend felt himself compelled to take was in no way the outcome of the teaching of the Oxford Mission was fully proved by Mr. Brown in the following statement, which he made at the annual festival of the Mission in 1890, and for which he had Mr. Townsend's own authority:

"In leaving the English Church, he (Mr. Townsend) adopted an entirely new principle. It has often been said, and it will often be said

again, that the principles of the Oxford Mission lead to Rome. I can only say Townsend himself did not think so. He gave up the Anglican principle of the preservation of truth, and took in its stead the Roman principle of the development of truth. The one principle did not grow out of the other; it was a new plant from a new root. The one had to be uprooted before the other could take its place; and he went so far as to say, in the last conversation I had with him here, that he thought it would in some respects have been easier for him to reach his present conclusions if he had been brought up on a different system altogether—if he had been brought up, for instance, in the strictest Calvinism."

It was thus, then, that the crisis was met; and because it was thus met it was soon seen that what might, humanly speaking, have thrown back and largely wrecked the work, only left the Mission with stronger grounds of sober hope, with wider views for the future, and with more quiet confidence as to its place and course in the life of India, than perhaps at any previous time of its career.

CHAPTER III.

THE SCHOOLS AND THE SUNDERBÂNS.

"All the place
Seemed less a cultivation than a waste.
Men work here only, scarce begin to live."

THE record of the year we have now reached shows that the hope with which the Mission met the troubles of 1889 was not an unfounded one. If that year seemed at the moment to threaten a check, it was soon apparent that it was in reality only a period of preparation for a large extension of the work of the Mission in many directions.

On New Year's Day, 1890, Mr. Field, whom we have mentioned before as having offered himself for the work of the Mission, arrived in Calcutta. Mr. Brown had returned from his well-earned holiday a few weeks before, and during the last months of 1889 Mr. Lloyd, a layman, had come to work with Mr. Whitehead at Bishop's College. Mr. Lloyd did not actually join the Mission till some years later; but as an associate he took an active share in much of its work, and by his ability

HENRY WHITEHEAD. [*To face p.* 55.

(Superior of the Oxford Mission 1890—1899. Now the Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Madras.)

and gentleness, his insight into native character, and his great sympathy, became one of the most valuable and helpful supporters of the work.

The New Year, then, saw the Mission with its forces re-collected and reinforced, and, what was a still greater fact, with a new Superior. It had been an open secret for some time that Mr. Whitehead had originally intended to offer himself for work with the Oxford Mission, but for the time the call to the management of Bishop's College appeared to be one which could not be put aside. As so often happens, what seemed at first a hindrance to his hopes was in the end the means to their fuller realisation. For when the proposal was made that he should become Superior of the Oxford Mission, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel raised no objection to his retaining the post of Principal of the college as well. And thus, without being united by any formal act, the works which had grown up round the Oxford Mission, and those which belonged to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Calcutta and the immediate neighbourhood, became closely connected, and were directed practically by one head.

The benefit of a connection of this kind had become apparent for some time, and, in fact, ever since Mr. Whitehead's arrival the Mission and

the college had tended more and more to work together. It will be remembered that the Mission High School had been lodged in a house in the college compound ever since the Mission had moved from Bow Bazaar in 1886, and with the school had gone Mr. Brown; while latterly Mr. Walker had lived at the college in order to lecture to the students. It was, of course, to the college that the boys of the Mission High School passed when they entered the University. For these reasons a single aim and mind directing the two works would naturally be a help to both. This was effectually secured by the appointment of Mr. Whitehead as Superior of the Mission, an appointment the wisdom and success of which has been abundantly and increasingly manifested in every succeeding year.

As Mr. Whitehead had long had the confidence of the members of the Mission, it was with a deep sense of thankfulness and joy that they welcomed him as their leader. But in accordance with the constitution he could not formally join the Brotherhood of the Epiphany until after a year's probation, so that the appointment had for the present to be provisional, the public and final installation being deferred till the Epiphany of 1891.

Another event which made the festival of 1890

noteworthy was the presence of Mr. Gore, who again visited the Mission, this time accompanied by Mr. Wakeman, Fellow of All Souls' College, Oxford, and treasurer of the Mission.[1] This second visit was much shorter than the first, but coming, as it did, after a period of such great anxiety, was doubly welcome, and the brethren had the additional help of Mr. Gore as the conductor of their annual retreat.

It is now time to turn more especially to the work of the Mission, which, as we have said, began to show signs of expansion in various directions, and which, from this date, begins to be more intimately connected with the various works belonging to Bishop's College.

The Mission had been now for four years in Muktaram Babu Street; and although the position was a better one for the purposes of the work than Bow Bazaar, the street in which it was situated presented many drawbacks; and the house itself proved far from convenient, owing to the smallness of the rooms. The one big room being used for the chapel, there was no other of sufficient size for

[1] On the death of Dr. Wilson, late Warden of Keble, in 1897, Mr. Wakeman accepted the office of Vice-Chairman of the committee at home. His sudden death in the present year has been a very heavy loss to the Mission, which from the first received his most generous and ungrudging support.

lectures or any large gatherings, for which purposes a room had to be awkwardly extemporised in a kind of back garden. No ground was to be had adjoining the house for building; and though in the quarter where the students lived, it was not in a position readily seen, and therefore not as much *en évidence* as was desirable. It seemed well, then, to try to make another move, and it was resolved this time to build a house especially for the Mission. The idea was taken up eagerly by the committee at home; and the indefatigable secretary, Miss Murray, undismayed with having £3000 to raise for an endowment fund for the school, set to work and with incredible rapidity collected the necessary funds for the new building.

The choice and acquisition of a site was a more lengthy and difficult task. One in every way suitable was at last found by Mr. Peach, to whom the matter had been entrusted, facing Cornwallis Street, the main central thoroughfare of Calcutta, and negotiations for its purchase were begun in September, 1889; but it took a whole year to bring the business to a conclusion, and it was not till September 17th, 1890, that the foundation-stone was laid by the Metropolitan. Once started, the actual work of building, which was put into the hands of Messrs. Mackintosh & Burn, a firm of

builders in Calcutta, went on rapidly, and the house was ready for use about the middle of 1891.

We have alluded to the advantage which was gained by the closer connection between the Mission and Bishop's College. The first happy result of this was seen in the improved organisation of the two schools connected with the college. Besides the High School, which belonged to the Oxford Mission, there was a lower or Industrial School belonging to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. This school, by a somewhat strange coincidence, was lodged in property belonging to the Oxford Mission. The boys, who were all Christians, came principally from the Christian families who lived in the missions of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in the Sunderbâns—a country district south of Calcutta, of which we shall very shortly have occasion to speak. Hitherto the two schools had been taught apart, but in this year Mr. Brown built a new set of class-rooms, and arranged for both the schools, which were mostly doing the same work, to be taught together. This brought up the different classes to a much more satisfactory size, and enabled one staff of teachers to do what had formerly been the work of two.

The printing-press which had been bought by Mr. Willis was at this time brought into the college

compound, and several of the elder boys in the Industrial School were taught the work of compositors. This Industrial School was under the charge of the Rev. M. L. Ghose, who had himself been trained at Bishop's College. He had already held the post of head master for several years, and has continued in the same responsible position ever since, fulfilling the duties of his charge with admirable sympathy, ability, and zeal.

Of the college itself we need only say that under Mr. Whitehead it had reached a state of efficiency greater than in any other period. It was in this year quite full, with several applicants waiting for admission. It contained a small theological class beyond the ordinary classes which were studying for the university examinations, and thus enabled those students who were preparing for holy orders to remain under the teaching and influence of the college up to their ordination.

It must be remembered that Bishop's College was, and still is, the only college in Calcutta at which students are resident, and that all the students are Christians. From it, year by year, men are sent out well educated, and with a real training in Christian Faith and life, and thus should be, in their different spheres of work, living centres of Christian influence to others. That

THE PRINCIPAL'S HOUSE, BISHOP'S COLLEGE.

[To face p. 61.

the large majority of the past students are doing good work for the Church is shown by the evidence of many independent witnesses from whom Mr. Whitehead hears from time to time; and the fact that it is much more through personal influence and example than by intellectual arguments that Christianity is spread, shows what an important work Bishop's College is doing for the conversion of India. A writer in the *Epiphany*, speaking of the college in 1895, says:

"In Bishop's College, Calcutta, Christianity has welded into one representatives of almost every caste, creed, and race which is to be found in India. Here, and here only, as far as we know, are such diverse elements to be found dwelling together in harmony, and we do not know how under any other conditions than those of Christianity such union is possible. That here, too, 'union is strength,' at least in some departments of effort, is shown by the fact that during the past season the college has won the Elliott shield for football, the Lansdown shield for cricket, and the Viceroy's medal for athletic sports—the three highest prizes open to native competition."

Here, then, in the schools and the college there existed as early as 1890 a system of education which as a framework was fairly complete. Down

in the villages in the Sunderbâns were a number of village schools, very primitive perhaps, but suited to the wants of the people. From there the more intelligent boys are often sent to the Industrial school at Calcutta, and the girls to a somewhat similar school, established by the Clewer Sisters, not far from Bishop's College. Those boys, again, who show special ability pass from the Industrial School to the High School, and in due course to the college and to the university examinations. Thus the Mission can carry a boy through all the stages of his education, from the village school to the B.A. degree of the Calcutta University, keeping him the whole time in its own schools and under Christian discipline and teaching. Writing of the results of this system in 1891, when it had reached a far less efficient state than that to which it has now attained, Mr. Whitehead said:

"The whole of this branch of our work is a thoroughly satisfactory one. It is capable, no doubt, of very great improvement and extension; but even now, after seven years of more or less preparatory work in laying the foundation of a system of education for native Christians, I can see the beneficial effects of what has already been done, in the life of the native Church. We are gradually gathering round us a body of young

THE STUDENTS' QUARTERS, BISHOP'S COLLEGE.

[*To face p.* 63.

men whom we have trained ourselves, and who are becoming themselves most valuable fellow-helpers. Indeed, it would be impossible to carry on our present work were it not for their aid and co-operation. The most influential and most important native congregation in Calcutta is entirely in the hands of a Bengali priest, who was ordained straight from Bishop's College five years ago. The Tamil congregation at St. Saviour's Church, Calcutta, is looked after by one of my old students, who will, I hope, soon be ordained. Another of my students is in charge of an important station in the Madras Diocese; and another who was ordained last year has been sent by the Bishop of Calcutta to take charge of a mission at Coweigunge, in the North-West Provinces. Besides these, we have a native priest, who was ordained from the college about five years ago, working in the Sunderbâns Mission, and a young graduate of the Calcutta University, who was educated at the High School and this college, now working with us as a teacher in the school and college; while two or three of the boys who have been trained at the lower school are now to be prepared for work in the Sunderbâns, and seem full of earnestness and zeal: and when we add to these a considerable number who have gone out to lay-work with a good

religious training and a far higher moral tone than they would otherwise have acquired, I feel that we may look back upon the results of the last seven years' educational work with the most sincere gratitude to God for the blessing He has allowed to rest upon it."

In October of this same year another important educational work was undertaken by the Mission at the earnest request of the Diocesan Board of Education—namely the charge of St. James' School. This is a school for Eurasians in Calcutta, and is situated in the Circular Road, close to St. James' Church. It has fairly good buildings and a good-sized playing-field; but it is poorly endowed, and the school fees are low and cannot well be raised. This has crippled the school in many ways, and among others has made it difficult to provide a really competent staff. It was this difficulty which led the Diocesan Board of Education to ask the Oxford Mission to undertake the management of the school. The Mission was not very desirous of acceding to the request; but at the time it seemed as if the school would collapse unless they came to the rescue. Mr. Peach therefore accepted the post of Rector, which he held till his return to England in 1896. During his tenure of office the numbers of the school increased

considerably, and a good deal was done by way of improvement to the playing-ground and buildings, as well as to the general organisation of the school. Three laymen came to work with him —Mr. Conway and Mr. Franklin in 1891, and Mr. Woodward in 1892,—all of whom have since been ordained. Mr. Woodward, to the great regret of his fellow-workers, was forbidden by the doctors to remain in India, and after his return home in 1895 offered himself for work in Newfoundland, where he has been placed in charge of an important mission by the Bishop. In 1897 the Bishop of Calcutta secured a new Rector for the school, who, being a married man, was unable to join the Brotherhood; and it was thought best, in the interest of the school and the Mission alike, that the connection between the two should be severed. St. James' School was then somewhat of an episode in the history of the Mission. It is the only real Church of England school of that class in Calcutta, and is therefore an important work—important not only as a means of giving a good Church education to the class of boys for whom it is meant, but also from a missionary point of view; for the Eurasians, being connected by their mixed parentage with both Europeans and natives, ought, if properly trained

and embued with real missionary zeal, to display qualities and sympathies which might form a valuable link between the two races.

A much larger work was the charge of the Sunderbâns Mission, which was also taken over by the Oxford Mission in this year at the request of the Bishop. The district to which this name, meaning the "forest of the Sunder tree," is given, extends fifty miles south of Calcutta, and is about fifty miles broad. Nearly the whole of it is occupied by rice-fields, and is thickly studded with small villages at distances of about a mile apart. The country is absolutely flat and very swampy, intersected in all directions by innumerable small canals, which take the place of roads, and are the chief means of communication. For about five months in the year it is entirely flooded—a physical condition well suited to the cultivation of rice, which is the staple product of the district. Scattered over this area there are some three thousand Christians belonging to our own Church, and there are five or six thousand more belonging to the Roman Catholics, Baptists, and Congregationalists. Nowhere do the divisions of Christendom produce more disastrous results than among these poor and ignorant villagers; and one among the many evils which the Mission found

arising from these unhappy divisions was the constant passing of the native Christians from one religious body to another.

The people are, as might be expected, very dull and slow, what energy they have being absorbed in the struggle with debt and malaria. The one thing which seems to awaken their intellectual powers is a law-suit, which has an extraordinary attraction for them. The difficulties of the situation had been much increased by the continued ill-health of the one S.P.G. missionary who was available for the district, and who had consequently been unable to superintend the work of the catechists, and of the schools and native teachers, with the result that the machinery of the Mission had got into great disorder. When the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel withdrew this, their last available missionary, the Oxford Brotherhood felt they could not refuse the request of the Bishop to undertake the superintendence of the district. Mr. Brown was accordingly appointed to give a general supervision to the whole, while Mr. Moore undertook the work of itinerating among the villages, holding services, inspecting the schools, and generally promoting the spiritual and temporal welfare of the people. To this work he devoted himself till April, 1894, when he was suddenly ordered home by

the doctor, on account of trouble with his eyesight which was largely due to the unselfish way in which he had given himself to the exposure and hardships incident to the work of a missionary in such a country. By far the larger part of his time was spent travelling from village to village—when there was sufficient water, by boats of various kinds and sizes; at other times walking across the half-dried fields which the flood had left, in the blazing heat of the sun. The food and lodging in the district were often of the roughest; and as the present writer can vouch from his own observation, the travelling equipage which Mr. Moore considered sufficient was of the most rudimentary kind—an article which was broken or which no one else thought good enough to use being appropriated by him with enthusiasm. But if his camp-baggage would have shocked the sense of propriety of a third-class native servant, his work was of the first quality; and it was his persistent self-devotion and self-denial, his deep and earnest religiousness and conception of duty, which were mainly the means of raising the missions out of the miserable condition into which they had fallen, and which encouraged and inspired all who worked with him. It was a matter of deep regret that the doctors held out no hopes of his being able to return to

FISHING IN THE SUNDERBÂNS.

the work; but it gave him the opportunity for fulfilling a wish which had been for some time in his heart, namely of offering himself to the Society of St. John the Evangelist at Cowley. Since then he has been professed and his health sufficiently restored for him to be able to work again in India, in the Fathers' admirable mission at Poona.

One other reason which led the Oxford Mission to take up this work was the fact that Miss Hoare, who for many years had spent and been spent in the cause of the Sunderbân Christians, had at last laid down her life for their sake. If the life and work in the country were rough and hard for a man, they were in every sense far more so for a lady; yet year after year Miss Hoare never shrunk back from, or wearied of, the ministry she had undertaken for the people of the district. If she had not been irresistibly drawn out to India by her love for them, in all human probability her life would have been spared. The Oxford Mission therefore felt that they could not allow a work which had been so nobly done to drop. It is also true to add that though the effort was undoubtedly a strain on the Mission staff, yet in some ways it afforded a wholesome change from the somewhat trying work among the Calcutta

students, and, moreover, was a means of bringing the Mission into touch with what are in many respects the main problems of missionary work in India—namely, work in the country districts; for it must be remembered that more than ninety per cent. of the population live in the country, the town population being a mere fraction of the whole.

A good idea of the life and character of this district is given in the following account, written by Mr. Brown in 1891:

"'The Sunderbâns' is the name given to the district of the Ganges delta south of Calcutta. The whole district, and, indeed, the ground on which Calcutta itself stands, is simply a theft from the Himalaya mountains, the thieves being the two great rivers Ganges and Brahmapûtra. Suppose a fleet of thirteen thousand ships starting every morning from the base of the mountains and each ship discharging a daily burden of fourteen hundred tons of earth into the Bay of Bengal, and you have a picture of what is going on here throughout the rainy season. And this work, it has been calculated, must have been in progress for thirteen thousand six hundred years to build up the present delta three hundred feet from the bottom of the sea. Land formed in

THE OXFORD MISSION SHALTI.

such a way has many engaging qualities. In the first place it is not so much land as mud, caked over by the sun, no doubt, at certain seasons of the year, but with a natural tendency to revert to its original consistency whenever a fall of rain—(and the rain does fall!)—gives it an excuse. Then also it has a way of disappearing rather more rapidly than it came. For instance, at a place called Goalanda, in 1875, the railway station stood near the river, protected by massive embankments, on which £130,000 had been spent. In the August of that year, however, the river took a fancy to that railway station, and deep water now covers its site. Another characteristic of the country is that it is absolutely flat, and is everywhere intersected by large and small canals. The natural features of the Sunderbâns therefore present rather serious obstacles to getting about. There are hardly any roads; the substitutes for them are ridges of mud banked up between the rice-fields, and these have a habit of breaking down and leaving a vast slough to wade through before you can land on the next ridge. Of course, the natives find little difficulty about it, for with their scanty clothing it does not much matter to them whether their path is through wet or dry; but the European finds himself terribly discounted by his civilisation.

As long as the rains last he gets on well enough in his *shalti*,—something like a narrowed and elongated punt, specially adapted for these small and narrow canals,—but towards the end of October he finds the canals begin to dry up. 'Capital!' thinks he; 'now I shall be able to walk.' But the fields which are too dry for punting may still be a good deal too wet for walking. If, casting away his civilisation, he adopts the manners and customs of the natives, and plunges barefooted into the mud, the result is probably a sore foot, possibly a snake bite, and almost certainly a fever. If in despair he betakes himself to a horse, the rains are upon him again, and the horse has to be consigned to the stable, where it will eat its head off for the next four or five months.

"Another difficulty consists in the fact that every single thing which you want must be taken with you. This difficulty does not occur to people at home, who naturally say, 'Put up at an inn.' But there are no inns. And the condition of the country as regards means of accommodation can be gathered from the following description of the life of an Indian peasant, which is evidently that of an eye-witness:

"'A fairly contented Indian peasant or artisan usually seems to Western eyes to possess no comforts

at all. His cottage, or rather hut, consists practically of a single room, often—(always in our district)—built of dried mud instead of brick, with no floor, no attempt at a chimney, the fuel used being charcoal, and no furniture except sometimes a *charpoy* or two—*i.e.* the simplest form of trestle-bed,—two or three brass *lotahs*, and some unglazed earthen cooking-pots. There are no chairs, no carpets, no tables for eating, no bedding in the English sense, nothing whatever on which a British pawnbroker would in an hour of expansiveness advance three shillings. The owner's clothing may be worth five shillings if he has a winter garment, and his wife's perhaps ten shillings more, her festival robe having a distinct value. The children wear nothing at all. The man never sees or thinks about meat of any kind. He never dreams of buying alcohol in any shape. The food of the household costs about six shillings a month, and consists of roasted rice or unleavened cakes, fish if procurable, vegetables, milk, and a little clarified butter, the whole being made tasteful with cheap country spices ; and his only luxury is sugar, made up—sometimes cleverly, sometimes horribly, according to the *cing* of each district—into sweetmeats.'

" Two things, and two things only, can usually be bought in the villages—rice and kerosene oil ; two

other things you can generally borrow—a roof over your head and a grass mat to place under you. There are also generally one or two houses in each village which can produce a kerosene oil box for a seat. For everything else you are dependent on what you bring with you—your bed, your bedding, your food, your cooking-vessels, your fuel, even your water,—for though there is 'water, water everywhere,' there is not a drop that is wholesome to drink.

"The Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces has lately been preaching the gospel of material comfort for India; but one could not willingly see this simple village life broken up, a life so absolutely free in its independence of external wants. Would that it were equally free in its independence of superstitious terrors! At the entrance of every village, somewhere under the trees, there is sure to be a row of hideous idols—wretched pieces of earthenware pottery, painted over with grinning faces, all of whom have to be propitiated if the earth is to bring forth its fruits and the seasons to bring their due succession of sunshine and moisture.

"In some thirty of these villages, scattered over an area which measures about fifty miles each way, are to be found between two and three

thousand Christians of our Church, besides Roman Catholics, Baptists, and Methodists. A lady who has worked in the district, triumphing over all its difficulties, for fifteen years, describes her work as turning mud images into human beings. And that is about what it is. Though so near to Calcutta, their existence is hardly recognised by the dwellers in the metropolis. A sportsman comes down now and then in search of a tiger, and the Government has made some small beginnings of education ; but for the most part they are both literally and metaphorically in the mud, out of which they have neither power nor courage to help themselves. The missionaries have done more for them than anybody, and yet after forty years of Christianity it seems as if there were still almost everything to do. To say that, however, is not quite fair. They have their own virtues, the virtues of simple and very dependent country people.

"Speaking now of our Christians : one of the first things that struck me about them was a freedom from gross vice which would compare very favourably with most country parishes in England. And along with this—though I should scarcely like to take it by itself as a sign of religious progress—is the fact that there is scarcely a man or woman in the whole district who

is of age to be a communicant that is not so. Most communicate whenever they have an opportunity ; all at the great festivals of the Church.

"Ignorance is our great enemy. Not more than one or two in a village know how to read and write. At the Church services there is painful silence where the responses ought to come. I have called up a lad working in the fields, ascertained that he was a Christian, and then asked whether he could say the Lord's Prayer. He did not even know what I meant. As a rule the girls know more than the boys, thanks to the noble work of Miss Hoare, whom I have already mentioned. But then the girls have a peculiar difficulty—nothing will induce them to open their lips in the presence of a man, not even in church. 'I suffer not a woman to speak,' is interpreted by them in its strictest literal significance. Our boys' schools are in a most backward state, and it will be our chief work, for many years to come, to get them into a state of efficiency. Fortunately the foundation has been laid, for in the boarding-school which has now been going on for some years in Calcutta there is a large proportion of these Sunderbân boys who, when they leave school, will be far more competent teachers than any we have had yet.

"Another effect of their ignorance is, that they

pass almost without a thought from one Christian body to another. The Roman priest comes at a time of want and offers to lend them money, and immediately they become Roman Catholics. They have a quarrel with the reader, and they pass over to the Baptists. So little individuality have they that if one member of the family goes to another body, all the members of the family, whether children or adults, go with him. The fact is, that the traditions of Hindu caste still cling to them. The whole effect of caste is to destroy individuality, to take away the capacity of thinking for oneself, to substitute a body of external rules for the inner voice of conscience, to make all the members of the caste move like the serried ranks of an army without the possibility of any one asserting an opinion of his own. What wonder if the age-long influence of this system is still felt after a generation or two of Christianity! The Christians themselves tend to become a separate caste, with rules a little different, no doubt, from those of the Hindus, but enforced by the same sanctions of fine and excommunication; and when once this deadly spirit creeps in, the work of the conversion of the heathen is entirely forgotten, and it gets to be looked upon almost as a thing impossible that a Hindu should forsake his own caste

and enter the Christian Church. This is the most striking defect in the Christianity of these people: they scarcely even dream of making converts; the missionary spirit is entirely dead.

"Education, then, and the rekindling of a missionary spirit is what we chiefly want. My great hope is that we shall be able to reorganise our village schools, to establish boarding-schools for boys and girls in their midst, to train the native readers and pastors until they become leaders in the cause of aggressive Christianity. All this is the work of time, not of just one or two years. One can scarcely hope to see it accomplished in one's own lifetime; but we can now be working towards it and making it easier for our successors to bring it about. 'Show Thy servants Thy work, and their children Thy glory,' must be our motto as well as our prayer.

"Our work amongst the Christians is very like parish work at home,—visiting the people, getting them to send their children to school, inspecting the schools, and holding services. But in every village there is sure to be a greater or less proportion of Hindus and Musalmans. For them a magic lantern has been immensely useful. When due notice has been given, the people flock to see it, and in this way we have had audiences of

NATIVE BRIDGE OVER A CANAL.

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some three thousand in all, in about fifteen different places, during the cold weather. We always show the life of Christ, and I generally take with me a student of Bishop's College, named Okhil Sinjh, formerly in our school, who preaches most excellently on the various scenes, and accompanies his preaching with the singing of Bengali hymns to the tune of his violin, which is intensely appreciated. In this way I hope that much good is being done, though we have not as yet seen any definite fruit in the way of conversion. I cannot speak too highly of the qualities of the lantern: it packs into a very small space, and yet gives a disc of some eight feet, which is quite large enough for all our purposes. The people quickly rig up a framework of bamboos in the open air, on which we hang our sheet. At one place we set it up in this way between the church and a road—one of the few roads of the district; and when all the people of the village had settled themselves on one side, under the shadow of the church, the pictures could also be seen on the other by people passing along the road. It happened to be a market day, and the people going home from market invariably stopped to look, so that in this way we got an attendance of some four hundred.

"On another occasion a Hindu station-master

asked us to give an exhibition at his station, and promised us a large attendance, 'six hundred, at least,' he said. We fixed the day, and went at the time appointed, and there we found indeed the station-master himself and his family, but not the 'six hundred.' His excuse was characteristic: 'Oh, I never thought you would come when you said you would.' However, by ringing the railway bell and sending messengers right and left, he managed to muster a respectable audience in about an hour, and we had a very successful exhibition. When it was all over and it was nearly midnight, a few laggards arrived, and suggested that we should begin it again! We could only promise to return at some future time."

In both the pastoral and evangelistic work in this district Mr. Brown and Mr. Moore were helped by the Rev. B. C. Chowdry, an old S.P.G. missionary who gave his services voluntarily, and by the Rev. M. L. Ghose and other Bengali fellow-workers. There were, as will have been seen, many difficulties in connection with the mission—some arising from the character and climate of the country, others much more serious, coming from the past rivalry of the various religious bodies at work in the district, and from the poverty, ignorance, and spiritual deadness of so many of the Christians. But, under

the firm and wise discipline exercised by the Oxford Mission, every year saw steady and real improvement, and in 1893, out of 3,345 baptised persons, 1,442 were communicants. These were distributed in ninety-three villages, for the use of which were three churches, twenty-nine chapels, and twenty-five schools, which were served, in addition to the two members of the Oxford Mission and three or four Bengali priests, by eleven readers and twenty-five schoolmasters. It is a work which needs patient and continuous toil, but one which will repay the labour bestowed upon it.

CHAPTER IV.

THE NEW MISSION HOUSE.

"Not throned above the skies,
Not golden-wall'd afar,
But where Christ's two or three
In His name gathered are.
Be in the midst of them
God's own Jerusalem!"

IT will have been seen that the year 1890 was a year in which the sphere of the Mission was considerably extended, and that it was now in a position to offer a great variety of work to any one who would join it. At the Mission House there was the regular work among the students, consisting principally of individual intercourse and visiting them in their clubs and lodgings. Here, too, in the cold weather was an opportunity for giving lectures to non-Christians; while the *Epiphany* afforded scope for a considerable amount of literary ability. The schools and Bishop's College offered different grades of educational work, from the teaching of elementary subjects up to lectures for the University examinations; while in the oversight

of the native congregations in Calcutta and the missions in the Sunderbâns was to be found abundance of ordinary pastoral work, besides that of a direct missionary kind.

From time to time, as opportunity occurred, lectures were given at Patna and at Dacca, and requests also came for lectures from as far away as Poona and Bombay. Their annual holiday afforded the members of the Mission the opportunity of visiting other parts of India and gaining fresh experience by seeing missionary efforts of different kinds. Thus in 1889 Mr. Walker visited Burmah, and in 1890 Mr. Peach made a very interesting tour among the flourishing Christian villages in south India. We mention this because it is important that it should be understood that by means of the variety of the work there is ample room in the Mission for men of very different gifts and capacities, and also that the wide extent of its responsibilities and opportunities does very urgently call for a much larger staff of men.

A glance at the list, in which is given the staff of the Mission during each successive year, will show that while the sphere of work and the burden of responsibility have very largely increased and is still increasing, the number of priests in the Mission has never exceeded nine, and has only

rarely reached that number, while it has frequently fallen as low as four or five; and even in those years when the staff appears to be largest the number does not always represent its effective strength; illness and necessary visits to England constantly taking away one or more members from active service. For instance, in 1895 the staff, which at the beginning of the year numbered seven, from various unforeseen causes fell as low as three towards the end. It is this constant fluctuation in the numbers of the Mission which is one of the great anxieties connected with the work, and which imperatively calls for a considerable increase in the permanent number of men. There is, we believe, an impression, still strong, that only men of great intellectual ability are wanted. This is an entire mistake. While the highest intellectual gifts will find ample scope for their exercise, they are not by any means the chief or only gifts required. Such qualities as go to make an ordinary good parish priest at home, backed by a real vocation to missionary work, are what are really needed. No one who has these qualifications need be afraid of not finding plenty of work, and work of as much interest as any at home.

The most important event of this year was

THE NEW OXFORD MISSION HOUSE, CORNWALLIS STREET.

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undoubtedly the opening of the new Mission House in Cornwallis Street. We have already spoken of the reasons which made it desirable for the Mission to move from the house in Muktaram Babu Street and also of the prolonged negotiations which delayed the purchase of the site for the new building. The foundation-stone was laid, as we saw, in November, 1890, and the house was finished by August, 1891. The Bishop was then away from Calcutta, and as he wished to open the house in person, and the Brethren of the Epiphany also specially wished him to do so, it was resolved that the formal opening should be deferred. This eventually took place on Wednesday, November 25th, 1891, with a special service of blessing by the Bishop and in the presence of a large company of lay and clerical friends.

The house, which is a large, oblong building, stands with its west end facing upon Cornwallis Street—a large street, which under various names runs right through the centre of Calcutta. Its situation is an ideal one for the special work of the Mission. It is almost exactly in the centre of the students' lodgings, and hundreds of students pass and repass it every day on their way to and from the colleges. The advantage of this more public position was seen in the largely increased attendance

of students at the lectures. In the old house the lecture-room was hidden away in a back garden, and it was found impossible to get an audience for any continuous course of lectures; but in the new house it was found practicable to maintain a course of weekly lectures for ten weeks during the cold weather, with a regular audience of from one hundred and fifty to two hundred men.

Being planned especially for the Mission, the house is, in all its arrangements, admirably adapted for its purpose; and the excellence of its construction was shown in the fact that in the somewhat severe shock of earthquake which caused so much damage in Calcutta in 1897, the Mission House received no injury whatever. It is, as will be seen from the illustration, a large three-storied building, plain but dignified, built, as are all Calcutta buildings of brick and stucco. The floors throughout the house are made of a kind of very smooth cement, which can be easily washed over with water and which helps very much in the way of cleanliness and coolness—in fact, it is quite one of the coolest houses in Calcutta. The main entrance is under a porch at the west end of the house, facing Cornwallis Street, which leads into a large hall open to the top of the house, from which a broad staircase leads up to the different stories, from the ground floor to the roof.

On the ground floor, besides two or three rooms, one of which is sometimes used as a students' club-room, there is the "Liddon Lecture Hall." This was so called because it was built with a legacy of £250 which was left by Dr. Liddon to the Mission at his death. Dr. Liddon had from the very first taken the warmest interest in the Mission, and had done much to help it on during its earlier stages by his sympathy and advice. It was felt, therefore, to be singularly appropriate that the room which was to be devoted to lectures, the aim of which was to bring home to the hearts of the young educated Bengalis the claim of Jesus Christ, should bear the name of one who for twenty years had, with unrivalled eloquence and deepest devotion, proclaimed that name from the pulpit of St. Paul's Cathedral in the city of London. The lecture-room is capable of holding nearly three hundred people, and with the club-room, which can be added to it, and the wide corridor into which it opens, could accommodate some five hundred to hear a lecture. At the east end is a small apse, which is screened off from the main room, but which can be fitted with an altar, and thus enables the room to be used as a chapel on such occasions as the annual festival, when the number of visitors is too great for the ordinary chapel upstairs.

On the first floor there are three rooms for the use of the Brethren, and at the other end a very fine room, as large as the lecture hall below, which serves as library, common-room, and refectory in one. It is absolutely plain, but lofty and well proportioned, which, with its size, gives it a real dignity. The walls are entirely lined with book-cases, which contain the Mission House library; and some idea of the difference between the present house and that in Muktaram Babu Street may be gained from the fact that the bookcases which in the old house used to touch the ceiling, now only reach half-way up the walls.

The library is the result of a gradual accumulation. A large proportion of the books formed the private library of Mr. Willis, which on his departure from Calcutta he very generously left to the Mission. Other members on joining the Brotherhood have brought their books with them, and for the most part placed them in the library. Many generous gifts have been made by members of the Association at home, and the committee makes an annual grant of money for the purchase of new books, thus enabling the librarian to keep the library up to date. The greater part of the library is naturally given up to theology—patristic, biblical, dogmatic, and homiletic. There is a

complete set of the Sacred Books of the East, and other books bearing on Indian social, political, and religious life, both ancient and modern. Philosophy, history, and biography are also well represented, and there are a good number of books of reference, such as dictionaries, etc. On the whole, the library is a very good one, and is perhaps the best theological library in Bengal. It is catalogued and well cared for, a boy being kept entirely for the continual dusting of the books, a very necessary matter in a country where damp and white ants are so destructive. It need not be pointed out how valuable a good library is to such a body as the Brotherhood of the Epiphany, the members of which have to be dealing continually with every kind of intellectual problem, and to whom not only enquirers, but clergy and others are constantly referring on social and theological questions. It is, then, very important that the library should be kept efficient by a continual supply of new books, and for this purpose a list of books which are wanted is published in each quarterly paper, which can be obtained of any of the local secretaries of the Mission.

Between the library and the other rooms on this floor is the chapel, the centre of the house as well as of the life and work of the Brotherhood. It is in

a way unique of its kind, being, we believe, the first specimen of Mr. Kempe's work which was seen in India. All the woodwork, which is of teak, was made in England under Mr. Kempe's own supervision, and sent out to Calcutta, where it was fitted and placed in the chapel. It consists of panelling for the entire walls up to the height of nine or ten feet, of plain but handsome stalls, and a very beautifully designed reredos, the pattern of which is brought out with great effect by a few touches of gilding. The whole gives a combination of good taste and quiet solemnity, carrying one back in thought to some chapel of an Oxford college, and is a perpetual rest and spiritual refreshment. All the woodwork was the generous gift of the late Mr. Wakeman, then treasurer of the Mission, and forms only one of his many benefactions to the Brotherhood. Many other beautiful gifts, such as vestments, altar frontals, silver sanctuary lamps, have been given from time to time by members of the Association. The chalice and paten were the gift of Mrs. King, the mother of the Bishop of Lincoln.[1] Thus the chapel is full of memories of those who have thought and prayed for the work; but one

[1] These were stolen in the early part of this year, 1899—a great loss, both on account of the beauty of the vessels themselves and of the associations which attached to them from the donor.

memory pervades it above all, that of Marsham Frederick Argles, of whom the chapel itself is a memorial—a memorial which is indeed fitting for one in the life of whom prayer and worship formed so great and real a part. Here the Brethren meet throughout the day to recite the divine office and to say "the hours"; and here, above all, is offered each day the Holy Eucharist—the daily thanksgiving for all God has given to, and done through, the Mission; and the daily pleading of the one all-sufficient and all-prevailing Sacrifice, for the conversion of India. In the larger and truer view which belongs to the unseen world may it not be that this is recognised as the most real and fruitful of all the work which the Mission is doing? Anyhow, in those times which must come again and again in all missionary efforts, when the sense of failure and disappointment lie heavy on the soul, and the long toil seems to bring no result, hope rekindles and recovers strength as morning by morning the great Sacrifice is pleaded, the memorial of Him who said, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me;" carrying with it the promise that the prayer shall indeed be answered and that the hearts of the children in India shall at last be turned to the Father of all.

The top story is entirely occupied with rooms for

the members of the Brotherhood. All the rooms on each floor open onto a wide and lofty verandah, which from its great length and width is quite imposing. Facing south, the house gets the full benefit of the south wind, which in the hot weather blows most refreshingly all night. From the top story a staircase leads up to the roof, which, like that of all Eastern houses, is flat, and is in constant use for a variety of purposes. This roof is, we believe, large enough for a full-sized tennis-court,—it was, we know, at times used as a skating-rink for roller skates! Standing high above all the surrounding buildings, it commands an extensive view of almost the whole of Calcutta, and after a hot day's work it is a refreshing place for sitting or walking when the sun has set. Very wonderful it is at night to stand there and to look up into the clear sky, in which the great stars shine with a brilliancy unknown in our heavier and damper climate; and then to look over the great heathen city, so unconscious of, nay, as yet so indifferent to, the real meaning of the heavens which night after night declare to it the glory of God,—that city, in the middle of which the Mission House stands like some point of vantage, from which is to go forth the message which is to win it to the Faith of Christ!

Writing of the house soon after the opening, the Bishop says :

"The building is in every way suitable, and the whole atmosphere seems to breathe of a calm and earnest settling down to work for generations. I hope it means that the Brotherhood is permanently rooted."

As far as what is of this world can be called permanent, the new house certainly gives the promise of a settled and abiding home for the Mission which ten years before first established itself in the hired house in Bow Bazaar. Year by year at the feast of the Epiphany an increasing number of English and native Christian friends meet at the Mission House to keep with the Brethren their annual festival. Here, too, throughout the year welcome visitors come from time to time—missionaries passing through Calcutta, apprentices from the ships lying in the port, soldiers from Fort William, members of the Civil Service, officers in the Army, travellers who are spending the cold weather in India. Many an English layman who has taken the trouble to come down the somewhat rough and unsavoury streets from the European end of Calcutta to pay the Mission a visit has very likely never thought of the encouragement and help which his bright, cheery presence has been.

Not only did the move into the new house show results in a largely increased and more regular attendance at the weekly lectures, but it seemed to bring to the Mission a different class of enquirers from those with whom it had come in contact in previous years. They were both intellectually more able and also more in earnest, and the Superior reported that they had more catechumens this year than the Mission had had during the whole ten years of its previous history. There did seem just at this time a very apparent movement towards Christianity: and in alluding to this in the annual report of that year, Mr. Whitehead remarked, that taken in connection with other years he thought it indicated a real progress of Christian influence. Thoughtful men were becoming more and more anxious as to the subject of the moral training of the University students, and were beginning to see that practically Christianity was the only religion that held out any hope of solving this problem. Another cause of this movement lay, he thought, in the fact that the Brahmo Somaj was beginning to lose its hold and decline in numbers and spiritual power. Based as it was on purely individual intuitions, it did not satisfy men's needs, and it was, moreover, even more unpopular among the orthodox Hindus than the Christian Church. There was, then, he felt, a

greater ground of encouragement than at any former time, and this with the ever-increasing sphere of work made the need of a much larger staff a matter of urgent importance. Such was the outlook at the close of 1891 as it appeared to those in Calcutta, though at the time Mr. Whitehead expressly said that it would be rash to assert that it was more than a passing wave of feeling. To gauge the depth or reality of such movements is always very difficult, and later events came to show that however real it was at the time, it was not lasting; and in a few years it became evident that a strong reaction antagonistic to Christianity was taking place. This arose partly from a political feeling opposed to anything English, and partly from an attempted revival of orthodox Hinduism. But of this we shall have to speak later on.

The large increase of work which had come to the Mission during the last three years had put a heavy burden on its resources, and in the earlier months of this year the strain upon the staff was very great. The numbers of the Mission, though larger than they had been before, were not large enough for the work, which was on all sides opening out; and at the end of 1891 and beginning of 1892 they were further reduced through the necessary absence of Mr. Walker and Mr. Peach, and for the

moment it did seem as if it might be necessary for the Mission to retrace its steps. This is obviously a condition in which no Mission ought ever to be. If a work is a living work and is blest of God, it must grow, and therefore must need a continual increase both of funds and of men. The responsibility for the supply of these needs lies with the Church at home. We could wish that the Church realised her responsibility more fully. Apart from many other considerations, this ought to be prominently brought before Churchmen : that the mortality in missions, especially in such a mission as that of the Universities' Mission to Central Africa, is very largely due to over-pressure—to the fact that every man is overworked, and that, in that state, illnesses which might otherwise have been easily thrown off are constantly fatal. It is really the negligence and apathy of the Church at home which is the cause of so many deaths in the mission field. Thanks to Miss Murray and the generosity of the Association in England, the financial needs of the Mission were always met. But for a time the weakness of the staff caused very real anxiety. This was especially so towards the end of 1891 and the earlier part of 1892, when, as we have said, Mr. Walker and Mr. Peach were both necessarily away. However, relief came in time. Mr. Walker

returned in July, and Mr. Peach, who had been delayed in England through an attack of illness, came out in November; and what was more, three new members arrived the same month—the Rev. Edward Manley, St. John's College, Cambridge; the Rev. Frederick Wingfield Douglass, Christ Church, Oxford, and curate of St. Pancras; and the Rev. George Longridge. Mr. Manley and Mr. Longridge were with the Mission for only two years, but Mr. Douglass has been a permanent addition to the staff. We shall have occasion to speak of his work later on in connection with the Hostel, and would only say now, that since the death of Mr. Philip Smith no one has won such a place in the hearts of the Calcutta students or done so much among them. From the first he threw himself into the work with a splendid courage and with a cheerfulness and hope and faith which has never faltered. It is largely owing to him and Mr. Walker that the work among the students has taken a new start, the results of which are already beginning to be apparent.

CHAPTER V.

THE CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY.

"For the worst of us, to say they have so seen;
For the better what it was they saw; the best
Impart the gift of seeing to the rest."

"THE present phase of education in India," writes Canon Gore, "may be said to date from Lord Macaulay's famous minute in 1835. Before his arrival in India the Committee of Public Instruction had been divided, five against five, on the question whether the Government should continue to subsidise, regulate, and extend the old Oriental learning, in Sanscrit, Persian, and Arabic, as they had been doing hitherto, or whether all this should be swept away in favour of English education.

"'The advocates of the two systems,' Sir George Trevelyan tells us in his *Life* of Lord Macaulay, 'laid their opinions before the supreme council; and Macaulay, as a member of that council, produced a minute in favour of the latter view which set the question at rest at once and for ever.' It said all that he was so well qualified to say

on the greatness of English literature and science, and heaped ridicule on the literature and science of India—on its 'medical doctrines, which would disgrace an English farrier; astronomy, which would move laughter in the girls at an English boarding-school; history, abounding with kings thirty feet high, and reigns thirty thousand years long; and geography made up of seas of treacle and seas of butter.' He pointed out with great richness of illustration how in modern Europe at the Renaissance and in Russia, within the last hundred and twenty years, we had had numerous instances of a great impulse given to the mind of a whole society, of prejudice overthrown, of knowledge diffused, of taste purified, of arts and sciences planted in countries which had recently been ignorant and barbarous, by the propagation of a foreign literature in place of the old national one. 'The language of Western Europe civilised Russia; I cannot doubt that they will do for the Hindu what they have done for the Tartar.'

"So it was decided. A thoughtful man might well have had his doubts whether all the contempt that Macaulay poured in this and other writings of his on Oriental literature and religion was not a good deal too much the contempt of utter unsympathy, the unsympathy of a utilitarian disposition with the

whole temper of the East. Since his days there has been a reaction. But in any case such was the decision, and Macaulay's biographer records the splendid success, as measured by statistics, which has attended the movement then inaugurated.

"What have been its results in the past fifty years? We may, perhaps, summarise them in this way:

"First, there has been an immense superficial diffusion among the large classes who come under the influence of the university education of the ideas and terms of modern Europe. If you talk to the students at the University in Calcutta, or if you are called upon to preside over some of the debates held in their clubs, you hear all the phrases with which you are familiar in 'liberal' England. The ideas might have come straight from leading articles in newspapers, or from Macaulay's *Essays*, or from the tracts of Mr. Bradlaugh, Mrs. Besant, or Colonel Ingersoll. The names of Mill and Herbert Spencer and Bain, of Leckey and Buckle, of Coleridge and Carlyle are 'household words.'

"Secondly, this superficial acquaintance with modern European ideas has had a destructive, but very little intellectual or spiritual reconstructive effect. The old idolatrous superstitions cannot live in their atmosphere. They wither and lose force. It is

equally destructive to the old brooding, speculative, subtle, metaphysical, and pantheistic philosophy of the Hindu. And if its 'enlightenment' and its utilitarian modes of thought have undermined the forces of superstitious worship and meditative philosophy, scarcely less has its individualism acted as a powerful solvent upon the strong ties and restraints of the old social 'caste' system of India. The familiarity with modern ideas, then, has had a destructive effect upon Hindu worship and metaphysics and social obligations, but very little reconstructive effect. The students are mostly sceptical, without being much more. The Theistic movement, of which a good deal was heard at home in connection with the visit to England of Keshub Chunder Sen, one of its founders, which is eclectic—that is, which is an attempt 'to take the best out of all religious systems' and which uses a good deal of Christian language, and professes a great deal of Christian belief—excites among the more earnest students a great deal of interest, but not apparently any of the enthusiasm of self-committal which would lead them to enrol themselves as actual members of the 'Somaj' or association. So strongly has the Government felt recently the disastrous effect on morals of the merely secular education, that an educational

committee has recently endeavoured to procure the establishment of a text-book of moral principles such as all good men would agree upon. But what is wanted is not principle—in the sense of ideas and maxims—but motives which should stimulate and appeal to the will and conscience, such motives as cannot come out of a text-book.

"Thirdly, the effect of European education has been apparently to produce a great gulf between the outer idea and language and the inner self of the Hindu student. His outer language and stock-in-trade is mostly modern, more or less blatant, utilitarian scepticism or eclectic Theism. But underneath—far underneath the English-speaking exterior—sometimes, perhaps, almost unknown to himself, there lives and works, silent and uncommunicative, the old Hindu self, impenetrable, reserved, inaccessible, unsatisfied in a world where it cannot find its home, where God does not mean it to find its home."

It is in this sort of world that some six thousand students live in Calcutta. Outside the lecture-room the staff of the University exercises no control whatever over them. There is no proctorial system, no licensing of lodgings, no supervision of any kind. It is true that many of the students live in their own homes in Calcutta, but a large

STREET IN THE NATIVE PART OF CALCUTTA.

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number are young men whose homes are away in the country, and who are consequently thrown among all the temptations of a great city, absolutely uncared for, at an age when sympathy, with guidance and proper discipline, are what they most need. The wonder is that the tone of the students is as good as it is. But the system is a miserable one and thoroughly bad in its effects.

How, then, do the students live who have not their home in Calcutta, or who do not board with friends or relations? They live in what are called "messes"—that is in houses holding sometimes as many as forty students, sometimes as few as ten or a dozen. As a rule the smaller messes are the best. The houses which are utilised for this purpose are in the close neighbourhood of the colleges, and are to be found in College and Cornwallis streets, and in the lanes running at all angles out of those thoroughfares.

"A mess is formed on various principles—sometimes on the basis of common friendship, sometimes on that of being at the same college, or in the same year of their university course, or because they belong to the same village or district. But beyond this there is one thing which regulates all else in the formation of a mess, and that is financial capacity. The student as

a rule is of very limited means, and he cannot afford to live except with those whose income is on the same scale as his own. Caste does not so much enter into the matter: for the cook can always be a Brahman, and therefore not only prepares food fit for a Brahman student, but also for every one else; and if the Brahman student commences to eat his food in the common dining-room the infinitesimal fraction of a minute before the non-Brahman students, the exigencies of caste are preserved. A body of students, having agreed to mess together, next proceed to secure a house. A six or seven-roomed, two-storied house is the average size, though some are much bigger. Seven rooms represent accommodation for many more than seven students, as two or three students generally share a room. A house such as this would be secured for between forty or fifty rupees a month. On the lower floor the cooking is done, and there, too, the dining-room is situated. A table, with benches running round it, is the regulation type in the more civilised abodes; in others the inmates sit on the floor, and eat out of dishes or from leaves also placed on the floor. Up a winding, ruinous stair they go to their common room and bedrooms. The common room is the most distinctive part of the mess. Here they study,

converse, receive visitors, and smoke. A stray chair or two, a table used only when writing has to be done, a shelf running across one side of the room, or an aristocratic bookcase, when funds permit, to hold their books, complete the furniture of the room. A rope hung across an angle of the room acts as clothes-horse for their superfluous garments; for in the common room they wear only the minimum of clothing. Here the weightiest problems are discussed. Students of the same college refresh their memory as to what was said at the college lectures; students of different colleges compare professors' notes. Evidence is recorded and never forgotten; it may be erroneously conveyed, but it sticks. Peculiarities are mimicked to perfection; curious gestures, uncommon expressions, occasional objurgations, a peculiar accent,—all are recorded by these critics, and coined into history. It is not only European professors that are weighed in the balance and found wanting; Bengali professors have also their peculiarities, which are duly chronicled. The sleeping rooms have even less furniture: a mat, or at best a *charpoy*, with a rug or shawl or coarse blanket as a covering in winter, are all they need.

"In students' English there is an expression, 'fooding-expenses,' which nothing will induce them

to part with. This forms a very important item of the expenditure of the mess. The chief point of agreement between all messes is quantity of food; quality differs in different cases. The cook who caters for the mess makes ends meet at the sacrifice of the students' health; but that is hardly his concern. His chief concern is *dustooree*; and that he may obtain this perquisite from students who pay him five rupees a month for two full meals a day it is necessary that he shall give them the coarsest rice, rancid vegetables, and vile curry. The monthly sum, which varies from five to fifteen rupees, accounts for two meals a day—one about 9.30 or 10 a.m., and the other at 8.30 or 9 p.m. These consist of variations of rice, vegetables, curry, and fish, as the case may be. But besides these two meals, students provide themselves with tiffin independently.

"The absolutely necessary clothing of a student who is poor consists of a shirt, made in the English pattern, which is almost *de rigueur*, a *dhutee*, a *chudder*, and a pair of shoes, with the addition in the cold weather of a shawl and a pair of stockings. The shirt costs from one rupee eight annas to two rupees, according to quality. Three shirts are necessary, more are desirable. The *dhutees* may be had for about twelve annas, and

the *chudder* for about the same rate. Shoes run from two rupees eight annas to five rupees, or, if the student prefers country slippers, only twelve annas. The stockings, often of an alarming mixture of colour—yellow, purple, and scarlet being a favourite combination—cost about one rupee a pair. The shawl, if of Birmingham manufacture, varies from three to five rupees; if true Indian, it costs from fifteen to fifty rupees, or even more,—but this only the 'mashers' wear. This genus is not unknown among the Calcutta students. He is redolent of vile perfumes, his fingers scintillate with real or sham jewels, his massive body is enswathed in costly raiment, and his empty face expresses contempt for honest poverty and simple gear.

"The house servants are two in number. The cook attends to the bazaar, the cooking, and purveying. He gets ten rupees a month as wages. The other chief servant is a woman, who does all the housework. She has her hands full, as, in addition to washing and cleaning the house, she has to get light refreshments for the members of the mess and do odd jobs for them. She gets six or seven rupees a month. Besides these two house-servants, there is the everlasting *dhobee*, who probably has a hard time of it with men of limited

wardrobes, as he has to make many journeys to and fro.

"Text-books mentioned in the university calendar, and note-books for taking down lectures, and 'keys' form an Indian student's library. If he is poor, he cannot afford any more. If he is rich, he does not care for any more, excepting in rare cases." [1]

Such are the domestic arrangements of the ordinary student, and a further light is thrown upon his life by the following article on "Student Life in Calcutta," which appeared in *Truth in India*. It opens out a side of things with which the Anglo-Indian, well as he knows the Babu externally, is probably little familiar:

"How few people," says the writer, "reflect that there is such a thing as student life in Calcutta, a manufacture of Babudom, a process by which the raw youth of Bengal are changed into the vastly superior B.A's., 'entrance fails,' much-suffering clerks, incipient orators, and embryo congress-*wallahs*, who excite us to mirth, but ought to wake our admiration if we only knew the extent of the transformation and the toil by which it is effected! We are apt to assume that Babus

[1] Taken from an article contributed to the O. M. C. *Quarterly Paper*, July, 1894.

A COUNTRY FAMILY GROUP.

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grow out of the ground and that Bengalis acquire English from their mothers,—a conclusion too improbable to be warranted by the mere profusion of the product. The fact is, Babus are made out of very unpromising material, and Bengalis acquire such English as they use by an amount of patient labour that would make Englishmen better linguists than they are generally known to be.

"Far away in the steamy plains of Bengal, amid surroundings that inspire neither poetry nor chivalry, the future Calcutta Babu grows up to a height of three feet, loved by his mother and spoiled by his father, and learns Bengali, arithmetic, and mythology. Then an ambition to learn English enters his small but swelling soul, and inflames him till he sees no object in life without English. He finds his father already prepared for the idea, and steels his inner nature against the sobs and tears of his mother. Ways and means are considered, a huge amount of advice is asked, and the entrance examination is probably passed without a sight of the great metropolis. But at the height of five feet our youthful aspirant, far different in both his outer and his inner man from what he was at three feet high, yet still green and timid, turns up in College street, as a student at the University. There he enters on a course of from

four to seven years' struggle with the physical and mental, material and moral obstacles that stand between him and a university degree, and may develop into a candidate in London for the Indian Civil Service, or settle into a stunted embodiment of small pay and bad English. But he toils and toils, in season and out of season, murmuring to himself by the hour out of his books, sometimes on foot as he paces up and down wherever he can find room, and sometimes on his back as he lies in a position as promotive of study in the East as it is destructive of it in the West. He submits to meagre food and worse privations, stoically resists the attractions of Calcutta, writes pitiful letters home for an extra four annas to get only once inside one of the brilliantly lighted and fairyland-like theatres of Beadon street. He begins to criticise Europeans, and to realise that he may have a share in public opinion; he becomes a debater and essayist, and adopts agnosticism instead of mythology. His agonies of home-sickness he keeps to himself, but utters aloud the despair which from time to time creeps over him as he counts the pages of his text-books and thinks how much he must accomplish before he may face the dreaded ordeal of examination! He prays impartially to all gods for success, but pins his firmest faith on

luck. However, he never swerves from his purpose or grudges his labour; his degree he will get or perish in the attempt. And thus is made the Babu who swarms over India, voluble in indifferent English and passing rich on fifty rupees a month; loyal in proportion as his means of subsistence are threatened, and national in proportion as some agitator appeals to his vanity; but in the main peace-loving and home-loving, mildly literary in his tastes, and energetic only in avoiding the expenditure of energy."

This may give our readers some idea of the outward aspect of the Calcutta University, and of the material conditions under which the students live. But the influence of their material surroundings is only one among the many influences which go to form their character, and by no means most powerful. Behind and beneath these mere outward things, as Canon Gore has pointed out, lies the disintegrating force of the education which is being given to them. Few, perhaps, except those who have carefully watched what has been going on underneath the surface of education in India, have any conception of the tremendous and far-reaching moral and religious issues which are at stake, or of the change which Western education is producing in that class of the

Indian people which it touches. We cannot, we think, put it more plainly than in the following extracts. The first is from a speech made by Sir Arthur Wilson at the annual meeting of the Mission in 1892. Sir Arthur held a very high position in the Indian Civil Service, and speaks out of the large experience which that position gave him. This is what he says of the result of the present system of education on the young men of India:

"It teaches the young men Western science with its accuracy, its criticism, its definitions, its careful distinguishing between the province of one subject and the province of another. It teaches them not only Western science, but it teaches them Western philosophy. It teaches them to read history through the medium of Western books. It accustoms them to read books—story-books, books of selections, and everything of that kind in which, in every page, there are ideals of conduct, implied if not expressed, utterly different from anything that Hinduism has ever heard of before. It teaches young men the habit of classifying and dividing, of carefully separating that which really properly belongs to religion and morals from that which belongs to history or philosophy, or to questions of social organisation or social science,—and by so doing it splits up, to the mind of any one who under-

stands the principle, the whole of this great complicated Hindu system into separate parts, and thereby it destroys the whole. Then, again, English education immediately brings to the minds which come under its influence the habit of secularising everything. The young Hindu has been accustomed to regard the philosophy in which he has been trained, and the history which he has been taught, the social and the family systems in which he has been brought up, as absolutely sacred and divine, far too sacred for discussion or consideration. But the moment that he gets into his first year in English education he finds every one of these subjects treated as purely secular matters, to be discussed without fear or reverence or hesitation of any kind. In the next place, he is brought face to face with the historical criticism of the West ; and the young man, if he has any thought at all, will and does apply that criticism to the mythology and to the history which he has been taught in his childhood ; and so the whole is again shaken. But further, not only is he taught this secular philosophy and this critical method, but he is promptly taught political economy as it is understood in the West, and the various branches of social and economical science.

"Now, reflect for a moment what all Western

economy is based on. It is based on one idea—a strict, hard, unflinching individualism. And just think of what the effect of that is upon the mind of a young man who has been brought up in a joint family, where the family labour for the joint benefit and the property is joint property. He has been accustomed to say of their possessions: 'This is ours. It is the property of our family.' Teach that young man the habit of saying, not, 'This is *ours*,' but, 'This is *mine*,' and you have worked a revolution. I have not time to dwell upon this further. I might point out to you many more ways in which English education destroys what it finds there. The effect of all this inevitably is, that in proportion as these young men have been trained in English-speaking schools and colleges, in that very proportion their old faith and their old creed grow weak; in that very proportion their old worship and their old ritual tend to lose their spiritual meaning; in that very proportion all the old morality, based upon their old creeds, loses its binding force; and all those powerful ties based on social organisation and family system which are so tremendously powerful in maintaining them within the limits of the recognised morality begin to lose their efficacy.

"That is surely an exceedingly serious state of things. But the question comes next, what is being given them by this English education in exchange for all this morality and spiritual force, and for all the influence which it takes away? There is only one answer, it gives nothing. It is absolutely true that, so far as the spiritual and moral side of the young man's character is concerned, English education is absolutely and solely negative and destructive. It gives nothing in return, there is no doubt about it. Although we may be training up from year to year batches of young men, intellectually better furnished than their fathers were; and though we may be turning them out better fitted in some respects to fight in the struggle for physical existence, we are turning them out morally poorer than they ever were before. To my mind I must say that this is an appalling state of things. To my mind it seems, perhaps, the most depressing and discouraging circumstance of any that now exist in connection with the administration of India; and I must say that to my knowledge there are many of the best friends of the people of India, and many of the best friends of the spread of knowledge, who would say without hesitation that it would have been far better for the people of the country if English

education had never come there at all, than that it should have come, and such a price should be paid for it as the moral declension which it has brought with it. This is no new complaint that I am making. I have not said a single thing that has not been said over and over again. Every native gentleman in Calcutta, the father of a family, knows it, and laments it, and will speak freely to you about it. The newspapers (native as well as English) have written columns and columns upon it. Police officers and magistrates and judges cannot help noticing it. The departments who have to do with education have written upon it. The Government of India has recognised the evil fully. It has published at least one resolution on the subject, eminently virtuous and perfectly infructuous."

The second extract which we will quote is from an article written in 1896 by a Bengali gentleman, Mr. Bishan Narayan Dar. He has been speaking of the results of the present system of education on the religious and social life of his fellow-countrymen, and he concludes his article with the following words :

" Hence it is that we have a generation of young men who have no landmark on earth and no lodestar in heaven ; who have no religious convictions,

no fixed moral principles, no well-defined ideals of conduct. There is no wonder, then, if Indian parents, to whom the one-sided education of their children has brought so much disappointment, turn round in bitterness and indignation to the Government and complain, as they are complaining now, 'You have taught our children science and philosophy; you have unrolled before their eyes the ample page of history, rich with the spoils of time—not only such as are recorded in the annals of mankind, but such as are written in letters of flame above and in the strata of the earth beneath. You call this civilisation, and are proud of having communicated its impact to India; but are you aware what mischief you are unwittingly doing us? Your scientific education has made our children irreligious, atheistic, agnostic; they are beginning to look upon religion as (what one of your clever writers called it the other day) "a dream of hysterical women and half-starved men"; they no longer believe in the divine source of virtue, but think that it is a proper balancing of profit and loss; they have become irreverent, disobedient, disloyal; they have lost all fixity of character; they are too ready to act on the first prompting of passion and interest and call it independence; they boast that they have adopted the Epicurean precept, "Eat, drink,

and be merry, for to-morrow we die and become carbonic acid, water, and ammonia"; and they laugh at us old men for what they mockingly call our antediluvian notions. Surely the Iron Age has come, for it has been said that when it comes knowledge will be more and more, but wisdom will be less and less. And that you Englishmen should be the leaders of such an age is quite in accordance with the fitness of things. You say you have given us light, but your light is worse than darkness. We do not thank you for it. Better far that our children should remain ignorant of your sciences, but retain the simple faith of their ancestors, than that they should know all the *ologies* of the day, but turn their back upon religion and morality as mere rags and remnants of a superstitious age.'

"Whether we agree or not with this complaint, which sounds ever and anon through the pæans of joy sung over the diffusion of European civilisation in India, like a passing bell across a marriage feast, it cannot fail to arouse in us a deep, tragic interest in the death of the old *régime* that must cause disquietude, discomfort, and unhappiness to millions on millions of men. There is no more tragic event under the sun than the death of a nation, and this consists in the destruction of the beliefs, institutions, and national peculiarities that give

it an individual character. This awful tragedy is now going on in India. The old religion is dying; the old morality is dying; the bonds of custom and tradition which are the bones and sinews of the social organism are dissolving; there is death and decomposition all around. For all this the secular spirit of the educational system is responsible. The crisis is serious; the destiny of a nation is at stake. Mere let-aloneist attitude will not do; something must be done to replace that which is passing away. If an attempt is made to face the crisis with boldness, with promptitude, and in right earnest, well and good; if not, matters will soon become still more hopeless, the reins will have been thrown upon the necks of the horses, and the last hope of reform without revolution will be gone."

These are grave and serious words, which surely every Englishman who cares for the welfare of India ought to lay to heart, for they reveal a religious and social condition among the young educated classes which is not only deplorable in the present, but which has in it the elements of very serious danger for the future.

And here it is natural to ask, Why does not the Government of India take some steps to remedy so serious an evil? The real remedy lies, of course,

in Christianity; and there all who know India best and who have the cause of missions most at heart are agreed that the Government as a government must be neutral; and for this, among other reasons, that an official recognition of Christianity would, in the present state of India, produce a vast number of utterly unreal conversions; of men confessing Christianity without any conviction of its truth or any desire to live the Christian life. But it may be asked again, Why, if this is impossible, does not the Government insist on the University adopting at least some plan for the better lodging and care of the students? This has indeed been talked of from time to time, but no result has as yet been arrived at. Nor do the following words, taken from one of the Government reports, hold out much hope of any remedy:

"Students who do not live with their parents or constituted guardians are exposed out of class hours to many dangerous influences, and are apt to contract habits alike injurious to their morals, their health, and their studies. It was proposed to have rules for the regulation of boarding-houses connected with the colleges affiliated to the University. The subject was discussed at a meeting of the educational authorities, who were also members of the senate of the University. They decided that it was

impossible for the University to deal with the matter so as to make and enforce rules which would prove effective. They hoped, however, that the Government might set an example in connection with its own Presidency college ; but it was recognised that the carrying of this into effect *would be extremely difficult*."

The Government did indeed establish a hostel, but whatever regulations were made were left to be enforced by a Bengali gentleman who was put in charge, and proved to be absolutely ineffective ; and the house has a thoroughly bad reputation.

We have dwelt at length on this subject because we feel that the real condition of things in Calcutta is so little realised in England, and because it is just this situation that such institutions as the Oxford Mission can most effectively deal with. Slowly and quietly the Brotherhood of the Epiphany have been studying the question ; year by year they have been gaining experience, getting to see below the surface, and to grasp the terrible condition to which the present system has brought the mass of the students. This experience they embodied in the following article, which appeared in the *Epiphany* in 1895, and which forms a most heavy and serious indictment of the present conditions of University education in Calcutta :

"Our educational system has invented a sufficiently unnatural state of things as it is by congregating in this metropolis and its environment a vast swarm of youths and boys of all ages, of rudimentary morals, and less than rudimentary religion, under no system of supervision or discipline of any sort or kind. That vice of every shade, nameless and shameless, should abound is of course only what is to be expected under the circumstances; and the results are constantly being brought before us, sometimes in lamentable instances of wrecked lives, shattered physique, and damaged minds, though most of all, perhaps, in the strange and utter opaqueness in all spiritual concerns which so conspicuously characterises the student population, and speaks all too clearly of the premature darkening that comes by an early surrender to evil.

"Meanwhile an infatuated Government goes blundering on, providing lecture-rooms and lectures and examinations in the pathetic hope of developing the talent of the country and rearing a morally competent official class. Lately it has been even so benevolent as to supply a large building for a boarding establishment in Calcutta; and though it naturally declines to equip it with the European supervision and organisation requisite for maintaining something like discipline in a barrack of one

hundred students, it has condescended to erect a third story, so as to lodge an additional hundred or so to swell the existing disorder, concerning which perhaps the less said the better. So we go drifting on from bad to worse, the ever-increasing numbers keeping pace with the growing degeneracy. It is a million pities that the educational future of a great country should be in the hands of the party of shallow intellectualism whose only nostrum for all the evils of mankind is bookish 'culture,' and who seem scarcely in earnest even over that. When will this pernicious superstition be outgrown? Not, we fear, till some appalling revelation opens our eyes to our insanity.

"Those who know what evils are sometimes apt to develop in public schools, even in England, under more or less of Christian supervision, may guess approximately what would be the result, if the youths now boarded at Eton, Harrow, and Rugby, as well as at the Universities, were sent for their education to London, to live promiscuously in lodgings as they pleased, with no obligations imposed upon them beyond a certain percentage of attendances at lectures; the education, besides, being regarded merely in the light of a step towards employment, like that given at certain well-known 'cramming' establishments. Picture the said

students, moreover, as armed morally with little beyond a vague consciousness of a certain impropriety or inexpediency in vice, with no definite principles on the subject, and brought up, if with any religion beyond a belief in the caste-system, in one which canonises impurity in its gods and their votaries, and has no disgrace or penalties for any but ceremonial transgressions! Imagine them, further, with hardly any sort of healthy amusement, physical or mental, to ease the strain of the crammer's curriculum; with no tastes, literary, artistic, or scientific, to give zest to life; residing in overcrowded and unhealthy lodgings, with little or no incitement or incentive to virtuous living, such as the Church supplies in even the very worst districts of London—one or two filthy and tumbledown temples being the only outward evidence of religion! Set them, lastly, in an environment such as we have alluded to, with temptations brought to their very doors, and then perhaps we may have some sort of imaginable parallel to the condition of things which we have been, through half a century of hopelessly misdirected educational activity, so assiduously creating for ourselves; though for an actual one we should probably have to go back to the ancient world and the Universities of Rome and Carthage, as portrayed by Augustine in the fifth century of our era.

"The Brahmo movement, all credit to it, has endeavoured to do something to lift the tone of morals and hold up a purer ideal; but since the death of its last great leader its influence has been precarious, and the rival Somajes appear to be in danger of dying, respectively, of sentimentalism and metaphysics. The old conservative 'orthodoxy,' whose practice was in some degree superior to its principles, and which succeeded in enforcing a certain amount of domestic restraint upon the members of the family, has broken up, and the authority of the overtaxed schoolmaster, intent chiefly upon his 'passes' and his grant, is obviously no practical substitute. Christianity, though its influence is more or less felt, is as yet too far off to be in direct touch with the moral life of this generation; it has been banned by universal Hindu opinion as a belief, the profession of which is criminal and worthy of excommunication.

"What remedy can be suggested? A tentative scheme for the inspection of boarding-houses was put forward some years back; but it never came to the birth, and at best it could but have scratched the merest surface of the evil. We can see no remedy but in an appeal to voluntary effort. This is surely a fresh direction into which European energy can be thrown! Why do not our chief

missionary colleges lay themselves out for a new development? Any one opening a model lodging-house for Hindu students, with the advantages of supervision and discipline under a resident manager, will find himself simply besieged with applications. The experiment has indeed been tried, with success beyond expectation. Hindu students have shown themselves eager to take advantage of such privileges when offered; they do not now shrink from living under the same roof with an Englishman. What an outlet this offers for fresh workers! We appeal to all friends, lay and clerical, who may be on the look-out for opportunities of missionary work, to consider what scope there is here for their talents. Young Oxford and Cambridge men are now learning to work in East London among the masses, and we know how much they have accomplished. There is a similar opening here; and it does not need an honour degree or a wranglership to manage a boarding-house.

"We would also appeal to our friends of the Church Missionary Society, of the General Assembly's and the Free Church colleges, the London Mission, and also the Fathers of St. Xavier's, to bestir themselves in this matter. They each have a large body of devout supporters in Europe to appeal to. Can they not put before their home

THE HOSTEL: EXTERIOR.

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committees the great need there is for work of this kind, and the feasibility of it? It would surely offer a vocation for many a young layman seeking for some work to do among non-Christian populations, and unable to find any suitable to his particular talents! It is no fanciful appeal we are making, but one that is forced upon us by our own experience. For the sake of the people of India, for the sake of the British Empire, for the sake of morality, for the sake of Christ and His Father, these things imperatively demand to be done before it is too late!"

The Oxford Mission was ready to do more than condemn—it was prepared to act, and as far as lay in its power to show the way towards at least one line of reform. As far back as 1889, and even before that, the Mission had thought of opening a boarding-house for students; but it was not until 1894 that they were able to carry their wishes into effect. It was Mr. Douglass who was the chief leader in this enterprise, and to his wisdom and self-sacrifice the success of the hostel, which has now been open for four years, is largely due.

The first step was to find a suitable house, if possible within easy reach of the Mission House. After some search, just what was wanted was found close at hand in a couple of newly built native

houses, which had not been inhabited and which the landlord agreed to throw into one. There was considerable difficulty at first in getting the Hindu landlord to put the sanitary arrangements in proper order, and it will probably be a long time before he forgets his first experience of having a "sahib" for a tenant. But persistence and firmness prevailed, and everything was, after some months, put in a satisfactory condition. The building, as will be seen from the picture, is just of the ordinary native kind, with rooms surrounding an open court in the middle of the house. On the lower floor is the kitchen and students' dining-room. Another room is kept as a common room for the students. This is furnished with a divan running round two sides of the room, with some small tables and bookcases, which through the kindness of a Bengali Christian lady and her brother have been well filled with books. Another room upstairs was set apart for Mr. Douglass, who is in charge of the hostel and who lives there, coming over to the Mission House for tiffin and dinner, and for the chapel services. The other ten rooms are occupied by the students, two of whom may be seen in the picture standing at the window of one of the upstairs rooms, while the figure in the lower window, which is the window of the common room, is that of the Superior.

Mr. Douglass, being a Christ Church man, has termed the hostel the "House," and the small bit of ground by its side, enclosed by the palings, is somewhat euphemistically entitled the "meadows," which, if they cannot be measured in acres, are yet big enough for playing Badminton.

With regard to the method on which the hostel is conducted, it was made clear from the first that the work was based on Christianity and on that alone; and every one who applied for a room was given quite clearly to understand that though no religious conditions were imposed, such as attending a Bible-class, and no pressure would in any way be put upon them, yet the aim of the Mission was directly and definitely to promote Christianity. It was wisely determined that no ground should be given for the charge that the Mission was trying to gain converts by secondary motives. Every student has a room to himself, instead of sharing it with two or three others, as is the custom in the messes; and none but *bonâ-fide* students are accepted. They each pay twelve rupees a month, which is what is paid in the average lodgings. Of this, nine rupees are returned to them each month for their mess expenses. A Brahman cook is engaged, and the members of the Mission do not go into the dining-room, and thus the rules of caste as regards

food are observed. Each student takes it in turn to manage the mess for a month. The "gate," to use a familiar Oxford word, is closed at 9 p.m., and every student is expected to be in by that time, unless he has special leave of absence. As to discipline, it is maintained not by a minute and definite set of rules, but by personal influence and by mutual consent. The rules, in fact, may be summed up in one, which is that those living in the house must behave as gentlemen. The result so far has been quite satisfactory. Mr. Douglass does not accept any applicant without first having a personal interview with him, and he reserves to himself the right of dismissing any student. All payments are made monthly; no debts are allowed, nor are students admitted who cannot pay the full fees. The servants are paid by the Mission, and all the furniture is the property of the Mission. At present it has to be subsidised by the committee at home, but there is no reason why it should not be in time self-supporting.

The hostel was opened in June, 1894. It was felt to be a venture, as it was a very strong step for a Hindu to live in the same house with a European, and a still stronger step to live under the immediate influence of a Christian mission. However, all doubts were quickly removed when

some forty applications were made for the ten rooms which were available; and not only did the students themselves apply, but fathers came and entreated Mr. Douglass to take their sons. So continuous has been the pressure of applications for rooms that in 1896 the accommodation was doubled by the building of another house adjoining the hostel, which has now room for twenty-two students instead of ten, and is quite full.

Thus the hostel, which was started as a venture of faith, has become an established, and we may hope, a permanent fact, and is an institution of sufficient importance to have attracted the favourable notice of the Government and to figure in an official report.

Writing of the influence of the hostel in 1895, the Superior said:

"The hostel has given us a leverage and a means of influence among the students which is of the utmost value. We have always felt that the first thing needed was to get thoroughly in touch with the daily life of the students; not only to address them in lectures and meet them on public occasions, or pay them periodical visits, but to gather a certain number round us and try to make the influence of the Mission felt upon all the little details of their ordinary life. And this is just what the hostel enables the Mission to do.

Mr. Douglass spends most of his time there, and always sleeps there, and the intercourse between the students at the hostel and the members of the Mission is perfectly free and unconstrained, and in many cases affectionate. But the influence of the hostel is not confined to the students who live in it; each one has his own friends, who naturally come to visit him, and as naturally go to see Mr. Douglass; and many students who would be very shy of going to the Mission House have no hesitation about going to pay a visit to the hostel. If a student goes to the Mission House he compromises himself, and lays himself open to the charge of wishing to become a Christian, and so to a certain amount of petty persecution. On the other hand, the hostel is neutral ground; and though it is known as a missionary institution, and looked upon as having a distinctly missionary aim, still it is also a lodging-house, and so affords a certain amount of cover to the timid enquirer."

In 1896 a further enlargement was made, and accommodation provided for thirty students. This necessitated having two members of the Mission resident at the hostel, and afforded the opportunity for building a small oratory on the roof of the house, where the daily offices are said and the Holy Eucharist is celebrated.

THE INTERIOR OF THE HOSTEL.

An experiment was tried in 1896 by introducing into the hostel two Christian students, both of whom were converts. This was perhaps a greater change than was at first fully realised; but the difficulties, which for a moment threatened, were happily overcome, and afforded an opportunity of teaching the other students some useful lessons. What was felt by the Hindu students at the time may be seen from the following account, which was written by Mr. Douglass:

"It was no sooner understood by the Hindu students what we were doing than we were petitioned against this innovation and violation of their rights. They thought this to be a 'Hindu boarding,' and why were we admitting Christians? We said we looked upon the hostel as a 'Hindu boarding,' and that we should respect caste as hitherto (we've never once set foot in their dining-room), and that the Christian students would, of course, feed apart from the Hindus. Yes, but the Christian students might come into their rooms while they were eating sweets or while the water-jars were there, or they might bathe in their baths! We explained that we had always reserved to ourselves the right to enter any room at any hour of the day or night; that we had bathed in their baths every morning for two years, and that we were Christians. And

then they admitted that the Hindus make a very great distinction between a European Christian and a Bengali Christian, and what they are prepared to endure in the former cannot be for one moment tolerated in the latter. This will give you some conception of what a Bengali must be prepared to bear at the hands of his own people on his baptism. It was then our turn to teach them something of the brotherhood of man in Jesus Christ our Lord. It's all quiet now, and we are getting along happily. As far as we can tell at present, the men seem to be a nice lot of fellows; they are certainly a nice-looking lot.

"To us the presence of the two Christians in the hostel makes an enormous difference. That sense of loneliness which but for the fellowship of a very faithful Christian servant would have been sometimes almost intolerable has been entirely taken away. If ever you want to be thrilled through and through, come and say prime or compline with those two Christian students and the two Christian servants on the roof of that Hindu boarding-house, over the heads of those Hindu students whose religion tries to teach them to think themselves utterly defiled by so much as the touch of a man who has confessed Jesus Christ."

THE REV. M. L. GHOSE AND STAFF OF THE INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL.

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CHAPTER VI.

THE INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL AND VISITS TO PATNA.

"I count life just a stuff
To try the soul's strength on, educe the man.
Who keeps one end in mind makes all things serve."

IN speaking of the Calcutta University and of the hostel, we have advanced somewhat beyond the period we had reached in Chapter IV.; but it seemed best to complete the account of that part of the Mission work before going on with the chronological order of events. We must, however, now retrace our steps to the beginning of the year 1893.

This year found the Mission with a staff of nine priests, one deacon, and several laymen, European and native. But large though the staff might seem when compared with that of former years, the great extension of the work made it none too big; moreover, it was at its full strength for only part of the year. Mr. Field, who had come for three years, but who had stayed a fourth in order to help the

Mission over a difficult time, returned in September. Somewhat earlier Mr. Brown and Mr. Franklin left, the former on a visit to England, while the latter, who had just been ordained priest, went to gain some experience in English parochial work before settling down to the work of the Mission. Mr. Conway also returned to England to read for a year at the Theological College at Cuddesden before his ordination.

Though all the work for which the Mission was responsible could be maintained, it was maintained under a sense of over-pressure, and there were no means of taking advantage of new openings whenever they offered themselves. Under these circumstances the work of 1893 was one of quietly carrying on all the various departments of the work, literary, educational, pastoral, and evangelistic, which the Mission had on hand. Only one new development, which was rather the revival of an old part of the work, was undertaken—namely the forming of an Indian branch of the Oxford Mission Association, which first under the secretaryship of Mrs. Cunliffe, and afterwards under that of Mrs. Cable, has proved a very real help not only in collecting funds for the work of the Mission in India, but in drawing together those interested in the Mission, and in gaining new associates.

And here we cannot refrain from saying how much the Mission owes, collectively and individually, to the unfailing kindness and sympathy of friends of both nationalities and of all classes, in India, who from time to time have been associated with it.

In 1894 the Rev. Ernest Linwood Strong, of St. John's College, Oxford, who for seven years had been curate of St. John the Divine, Kennington, joined the Mission, and has since been associated with Mr. Douglass in the care of the hostel, and seems to have very special gifts for work among the students. Another priest, the Rev. R. D. Ringrose, of Merton College, Oxford, and curate of Wantage, also came with him ; but after a short stay it was found that the climate of Calcutta was quite unsuited to his constitution, and to his great regret, as well as to the regret of all who knew him, he had to return home.

A visit which took place this year must not pass unrecorded, namely that of the Rev. Fr. Congreve of the Society of St. John the Evangelist, Cowley. He very kindly came from Bombay to conduct the annual retreat for the Brethren of the Epiphany, and he also gave a most attractive lecture to the students on Tennyson's *Palace of Art*, which was one of the text-books for the University B.A. examination for that year.

The general work of the Mission each year proceeds on its usual lines, and does not, as a whole, offer any particular point for special remark. It is work of that kind, which, because it is solid and good, goes on for the most part with a quiet and uneventful progressiveness. But every now and again some part of the work reaches a point at which a distinct advance becomes perceptible, and shows itself either in new and enlarged buildings or in some fresh development within the work itself. Such a point had been reached this year by the Industrial School, and an account of this may well form the central point of interest for 1894. In order to make the position of this school clear some little historical retrospect is necessary.

It may be remembered that we have had cause to mention it before in connection with the Oxford Mission High School. This school, which originally belonged to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, was started as far back as 1854, and so had, at the period we have now reached, completed its fortieth year. It had been located during its history in various places in or near Calcutta; but in 1887 it at last found a home in a compound and buildings belonging to the Oxford Mission, which were situated just across

BOYS OF THE INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL AT WORK.

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the road which bounds the property of Bishop's College. It had at that time about fifty boarders, all of whom were Christians. The boys are mostly the sons of Christian villagers living in the Sunderbâns, and have come to the Industrial School from the village schools belonging to the S.P.G. Mission in that district. A few of the cleverer lads pass on to the High School at Bishop's College, but the large majority of them are given a good education in elementary subjects, and are taught some useful trade. The current expenses of the school are supplied from three sources—from a grant given by the Diocesan Board of Missions, from the fees of the boys, and from the donations and subscriptions (the latter chiefly in the form of scholarships) of friends in India and England. The industrial department of the school, with the exception of a small monthly grant of twenty-five rupees, is entirely self-supporting, and has grown under the care of the headmaster, Rev. M. L. Ghose, into quite a flourishing business, turning out really first-class work.

The importance of such a school is very great, for one of the chief difficulties for native converts is to find employment such as will enable them to earn their living. As a rule a native Christian boy would be refused as an apprentice by any

Hindu tradesman or mechanic, and would find it very difficult, even if he knew a trade, to obtain employment under a Hindu master. Consequently the question, "If I become a Christian, how shall I support my family?" is a very serious one; while native Christians who have no means of earning their own living become often little more than pensioners of some mission, and as a natural result of such a condition frequently bring reproach upon Christianity. There is, then, a very great need of industrial schools, and of industrial businesses employing native Christians and managed on really business principles. Printing, weaving, oil-crushing, carpentering, blacksmith and engineering work all offer suitable openings, provided they are taken up and managed by men who really understand the work. There is no reason that the managers should be missionaries in the technical sense of the word, but they should be really Christian men, who would undertake such work in the ordinary business way, but with the aim of employing only Christian workmen. This has, in fact, been tried by a printing firm in Bombay, which is now largely an industry for native Christians; and it is worthy of note that when, during the plague, many of the business houses had to be closed because the workmen had fled,

THE OXFORD MISSION INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL: THE NEW BUILDINGS.

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this firm was able to remain open, as not one of the native Christian employeés left them. As a step towards this, and a very important step, the Industrial School claims a place, and each year it gives increasing evidence of its great usefulness, both as a school in the ordinary sense and as a school of technical instruction.

Since 1887, when the school moved to its present position close to Bishop's College, it has been steadily growing in numbers, until from a total of fifty boys in 1886 it had risen in 1894 to a hundred and ten. This made it absolutely necessary to provide new buildings, as the old buildings were not only overcrowded, but were very inconveniently placed, and many of them in very bad repair, the property being already old when the Mission bought it. It was resolved, therefore, to build an entirely new school, with a chapel, dining-hall, large dormitories, and masters' rooms. The work was begun in this year, and finished in 1896, at a cost of £2,000. A considerable amount was saved by the care of Rev. M. L. Ghose and the staff of the Industrial School, who superintended the work and had the woodwork made in the school itself. The new building has not only provided an adequate and commodious home for a hundred and sixty boys, but it has enabled the old buildings which were

scattered about the compound to be pulled down, and thus has given ample room for the erection of new and better workshops.

In the beginning of 1895 the industrial department was affiliated to the Government Engineering College at Seedpoor, near Calcutta, and three of the boys attended the college as day scholars. This was an important step, as it gave an opportunity to the boys of learning the higher branches of engineering and carpenters' work, as well as the making of models and framing estimates. It also enabled the school to buy tools at cost price, and has been the means of its adding instruction in blacksmiths' and other ironwork to that of carpentering. Finally, by an arrangement the details of which need not be explained, it was agreed that the Oxford Mission should permanently take over the Industrial School, for which it had, as we have seen, provided entirely new buildings, and should in exchange hand over to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel the old Oxford Mission High School, which since 1886 had been housed in Bishop's College compound and in buildings belonging to the Society. The Mission thus possesses a school of which it may well be proud, and which is a most valuable contribution on the part of the Oxford Mission to that most

important work of building up the native Christian community.

The change just mentioned in the ownership of the two schools was rather a legal than a real change, inasmuch as while the office of Principal of the college and Superior of the Mission are vested in the same person, the interests and sympathy of the Mission are naturally shown to all the workers connected with the college as well as to its own. And the close connection between the two is shown in the fact that the present headmaster of the High School, Mr. Isan Chowdry, was one of the first boys who came under the care of the Mission when it began its work in Calcutta, and who, first as a pupil, then for some years as a lay-brother, and finally as assistant master at the school under Mr. Brown, has been in the closest relations to the Mission all his life.

But, to return to the Mission House and the work which flows more directly from it. It will be remembered that we have alluded once or twice to visits which were made by members of the Mission from time to time to Patna and Dacca, both large towns in the Bengal Presidency, in each of which there are colleges with a considerable number of students. It is much to be wished that the Mission was strong enough to have a permanent

branch house at least at Patna, but till the staff is considerably increased that is impossible. That the Brethren very much desire to take up this work is shown in a letter written by a member of the Mission in this year on this very point. He says :

"It is somewhat disheartening to be so often prevented in doing work which needs very much to be done, and which ought to be done by the Oxford Mission. Calcutta is the centre to which all students from the rest of the Presidency eventually come, and it would be a great advantage to have had touch with them before they get absorbed in a great mass of Calcutta students. The atmosphere of Calcutta is not congenial to honest enquiry, and seems, I believe, to get less so than it was when the Mission first came here, twelve or thirteen years ago. This is due, perhaps, partly to a wave of anti-European feeling which seems to be passing over Calcutta just now, and partly to a revival of philosophic Hinduism. These difficulties are less felt in the country districts ; and the students in the country colleges are, I think, much more open to the appeal of religion than those here, in Calcutta.

"Also visits of the kind I am speaking of might have another and very important result—namely the establishment of schools for Hindu boys,

managed by Christian masters. A good school is almost certain to get abundance of pupils, and very much might be done, if not in the way of actual conversion (which in the case of boys still under their parents' control would not be practicable or desirable, except in very exceptional cases), yet in the way of raising the boys to a higher moral level and giving them a conception of moral responsibility. If that could be done, as it might be, through schools managed by Christian masters, it would be making a very real preparation for the acceptance of the Christian faith in later life; for where we are now so constantly baffled is in the fact that with the greater number of enquirers one has to go back to the very first principles, and we constantly lose sight of them before we have time to get any further. But, as I have said, though all this work lies before us, we cannot touch it, just because we are so few in number; if we could make sure of a staff of six or seven men to be regularly at the Mission House, we could do much in this way, and very interesting work it would be."

Occasional visits are therefore all that, at present, the Mission can manage. In February Mr. Brown and the Superior went to Patna, the capital of Behar and a large centre of education. They

hired a small house in the bazaar, established themselves in the midst of the people, and then announced that they were at home to visitors. They began with some lectures in the hall of a Hindu college, which was kindly lent to them by the proprietor. These were attended by crowded audiences and they served as a useful mode of introduction to the people. At first visitors were rather slow in coming, but after a time they conquered their shyness and came in a constant stream. One incident is characteristic. Mr. Brown and the Superior were sitting at breakfast one morning after a lecture given on the previous evening by Mr. Brown on "Ideals of Life." A Hindu youth of about sixteen years entered, abruptly remarking, "I want some higher ideals of life." They asked him to sit down in an adjoining room till breakfast was over. Then Mr. Brown went to him, and as a preliminary began to read and explain the ten commandments, when the youthful idealist interrupted him with the remark, "Oh, I have written a book on the Ten Commandments, and made ten more of my own!" However, other visitors were of a more promising kind, and with some they had very interesting conversations. After a few days the Superior had to go back to Calcutta, and Mr. Ringrose came up to supply

his place. He and Mr. Brown stayed about a fortnight, and ended their visit with a series of magic-lantern lectures, on the life of our Lord, in the courtyard of their house. Crowded audiences came each night and seemed much interested.

In September Mr. Brown and Mr. Walker paid another visit to Patna, and took a house in the bazaar close to the former one. Mr. Ollenbach, of the Patna opium factory, very kindly selected the house for them and supplied them with furniture. They stayed for over three weeks, during which time two lectures, both very well attended, were given by Mr. Walker at the college: and at the close of their visit Mr. Brown again gave some magic-lantern lectures at their house. All the time that they were there a large number of Hindu students came to see them, encouraging them to hope that their visits had done good by stirring up a spirit of enquiry, and so paving the way for more definite work in the future. The Behari students are not so clever as the Bengalis, but they are a simpler race, and have not as yet come to look on religious discussions as a form of intellectual exercise.

In March Mr. Brown and Mr. Walker paid a visit to Dacca, the largest educational centre in Bengal next to Calcutta. The chaplain, Mr. Davids, kindly

entertained them during their stay, and gave them every possible help in their work. They had a series of lectures, which were fairly successful; but on the whole they were not so favourably impressed with the students at Dacca as with those at Patna. Mr. Brown went afterwards to Jessore to preside at a students' meeting, and was hospitably entertained by the Baptist missionary. It was from Jessore that they received the curious appeal from some native Christians to establish a Mission there, on the ground that "there are no Protestants here, only Baptists and Roman Catholics." Mr. Walker continued the tour, visiting Mymensingh and Comillah, giving lectures in each town, but at the former his lecture was spoilt by a heavy thunderstorm.

That visits such as these were appreciated by the students is shown by the following extract from the *Indian Churchman*, giving an account, from an independent source, of the work done by the members of the Mission at Patna:—

"A special interest attaches to the two visits now to be noticed, in that the members of the Brotherhood, like the apostle of the Gentiles, 'dwelt in their own hired house' in the city, whence has radiated an influence reaching wider and deeper than can be exercised by the more formal public lectures which were given—powerful

and practical as they were. In the choice of subjects for their lectures the special needs and temptations of the large student audiences had been evidently studied, and the crowded hall and verandahs, and the silence and attention of a body usually noisy, was the respectful response to that thoughtfulness.

"There were in all four public lectures, and the mention of their subjects—'Ideals of Life'; 'Student Life in India'; 'Conscience'; 'Life: Its Objects'—shows how appropriate they were. The two lectures on 'Conscience' and 'Life: Its Objects,' which were not merely sustained oratorical utterances or intellectual feasts, but a masterly combination of philosophic reasoning, practical illustration, and deep, stirring earnestness, held the large audiences at the time of delivery, and have left deep impressions on several. Exhausting as was the heat of the room, the lecturers were not only willing to stew, but most cheerfully forgot their own discomfort in the cause of that discomfort—the closely packed listeners. It is therefore to be regretted that out of this general harmony one jarring note should have been heard after the lecture on 'Student Life.' This eminently profitable study brought to his feet a Bengali professor, who, in mellifluous tones, offered for the consideration of the lecturer a long list of national

grievances, possibly gathered out of the annually swelling resolutions of the Congress reports, but by no means a logical appendage to the suggestive address of the Superior. However, it did no harm, and the public lectures were followed up by three given in the apostolic lodging no 'Events in the Life of our Lord,' and illustrated by the magic lantern. They were restricted by ticket to those who especially manifested a real desire for more definite instruction. Here, too, the attendances were gratifying, while the daily stream of individual visitors and enquirers at the temporary Mission House, if not copious, was at least continuous.

"The tender sympathy which has marked every step in their intercourse with the people is a matter which has had a real influence upon educated native minds; while the cordial reception given at Patna to the Oxford Mission seems to point clearly to the duty of a permanent occupation of a field which has yielded to their gentle plough. Perhaps in this connection a word of farewell will be permitted to one of the Brotherhood who was amongst us in February, but whose enforced departure soon after was a distinct loss to India. His visit here emphasised the conviction that if such constitutions were transplanted from Calcutta to regions less cruel, the losses to the community

might be minimised, for he said that the change of three hundred miles had made him almost forget his ailment; and when brought onto our oasis (the Maidan) for a game of cricket, he exultingly exclaimed, 'I feel as if I were at the seaside.' He loved the country, he loved its people, as that too brief experience abundantly showed, and one feels that he might have had his heart's desire could he have worked in a climate which promised more merciful treatment. We trust this personal reference to the Rev. R. D. Ringrose will be accepted as an affectionate remembrance from those who met him here, and amongst whom there is still a real hope that the separation is not final."

The close of 1895 brought a most welcome addition to the staff at Bishop's college in the person of the Rev. W. L. Nanson. It had for some time been apparent that the burden of the double responsibility of the college and the Oxford Mission, not to mention a vast amount of diocesan and other work which fell upon Mr. Whitehead, was more than one man could rightly bear. This was now becoming a still more pressing matter, as not only was the work of the Oxford Mission increasing, but there was a prospect of a new and very heavy charge coming upon them in the immediate future; while the work of the college

had largely increased, and plans were being considered for practically doubling the number of students. Fortunately, at this time Mr. Nanson, who had for some years been in charge of the Mission belonging to the Cowley Fathers, at Poona, on account of the Fathers being able to increase their staff in India, felt free to resign his charge there and accept the post at Bishop's College which Mr. Whitehead offered to him. In him the college gained a missionary of tried experience and of great capacity, and his appointment was not only a real addition to the strength of the college, but was a joy to the members of the Oxford Mission, to many of whom he was personally known.

It will be remembered that at the end of 1893 Mr. Conway and Mr. Franklin had gone to England, the former for his ordination, and the latter to gain some experience of English parochial work. In India, where every priest has to work single-handed, it is practically impossible for a young priest to get any real training in the ministry; and yet, as was said before, not only for the work of the Indian chaplaincies, but also for a great part of the work of the Oxford Mission, the general experience and training which is only got in a good English parish is of the greatest value. It was for this reason that it was thought best for both Mr. Conway and Mr.

Franklin to go to England for two or three years, to work in some well-organised parish before settling down to their work in India. We would wish rather to emphasise this fact because we believe that it is somewhat generally supposed that it is only men of exceptional intellectual ability who are wanted for the Mission. There is indeed ample work for men with the highest intellectual gifts; but *the* men who are wanted for the largest part of the work are men who are good parish priests at home; for experience shows that it is a good English parochial training which is on the whole the best preparation for the more specialised work which they would meet with in Calcutta.

In December 1896 Mr. Conway and Mr. Franklin both returned with the Superior, who had been on a visit to England, and brought with them two new members for the Mission—the Rev. Charles Thomas Campion, late scholar of Oriel College, Oxford, curate of St. Ann's, Manchester, and Rev. John Roper Cooke, late scholar of Wadham, curate of Downham, in the diocese of Ely. Unfortunately Mr. Campion was attacked with fever soon after his arrival, which clung to him with such persistence that he was obliged under the doctor's orders to give up the hope of remaining in India, and thus a very valuable addition to the strength of the

repeated applications, the separatist body was received into the Church of England by Bishop Cotton, and in 1872 their leader, Mr. Bareiro, was ordained deacon by Bishop Milman. In 1879 Mr. Bareiro died, and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel decided not to carry on the work, believing that Mr. Bareiro's following had practically died out. This, however, was not the case, and those of his followers who remained were absorbed by the Baptists. One result was that many of them were required to be re-baptised. This they strongly objected to. Some resisted for three, four, or five years, and some held out for fifteen years till the Church of England came back to them. Then the children were not baptised, and this was a grievance which, apart from any theological knowledge, wounded the feelings of many who wished their children admitted into the fold of Christ.

"However, it is probable that no movement would have been made but for difficulties which arose among the Baptists themselves. The result was disorganisation and dissatisfaction all over the district. The pastoral work was made self-supporting by being practically abolished. When travelling in the district, I found large congregations of some three or four hundred Christians under the

pastoral charge of men who could hardly read or write. This stirred up a feeling of opposition, and led the former members of the Church of England to claim once more their privileges as Churchmen. In 1892 a petition was sent to the Bishop of Calcutta, numerously signed, which stated that a considerable number of Christians in the district belonged to the Church of England, and had been compelled to join the Baptists against their will, and that they earnestly desired to have their children baptised and have the services of their own Church. This was followed by other similar petitions, till at last, in 1894, the Bishop sent me into the district to enquire into the matter, with the result that at the beginning of this year (1895) it was resolved by the Bishop, with the full consent of the Board of Missions, to receive back these people and establish schools and services for them in the various villages. I visited the district myself in March, and stayed there for about three weeks. Mr. Brown spent nearly a month there in July, and I was there again for five weeks in September and October. As the result of a year's work there, there are now about a thousand members of the Church of England in the district.

"During my last visit I baptised over one hundred and ninety persons of all ages, from eighty years

to eight days, and received into the Church of England over one hundred and sixty men and women. What the movement will grow to it is impossible to say. The strong opposition of the Baptists from the very first has, unhappily, stirred up a great deal of party feeling, but also an active spirit of enquiry, especially on the question of infant baptism. It is always difficult in such cases to know what is going on beneath the surface ; but it seems not improbable that next year, after the Bishop has been in the district to hold confirmations, we shall have to provide for very nearly fifteen hundred people. The force of circumstances has compelled the members of the Oxford Mission to undertake the responsibility of organising and supervising this work during the last year, and it is not likely that they will be relieved of the responsibility in 1896. We can only hope that the staff of the Mission will prove sufficiently elastic to meet this new and heavy demand upon its time and energies."

The result of this deplorable desertion of her children by the Church is touchingly shown in an incident which came to the notice of Mr. Whitehead in the course of his tour in the district, of which he wrote as follows :

"The old reader of the Mission in Potihar, in

spite of what might well seem irresistible temptations to abandon the Church of his baptism, was more faithful to her than she was to him. For fifteen years he has remained steadfast with his family, and has kept two other men faithful with him, one an old man of seventy-four years of age, and another a man of about forty with his wife and child. The old reader has a son of about thirty-five with a wife and two children at Potihar, and a younger son now studying medicine at Barisal. It is a melancholy commentary on the slackness with which the work was carried on twenty or thirty years ago that with the exception of the old reader himself and his wife, not a single one of these believers in Christ and faithful adherents of the Church had ever been baptised. By the help of a tattered Prayer-Book and Bible the old man has during these fifteen years kept alive the seed of faith and hope in the hearts of this small flock in the wilderness. But, apart from his ministrations, they had been absolutely destitute of all means of grace. He and his wife had not received the Holy Communion for all those years, and their children and grandchildren had grown up untaught and unbaptised. It may well be imagined that our coming was to them all like the sight of a sail to shipwrecked sailors on a

desert isle, and was felt as a direct answer to their prayers and longings."

At another village, when Mr. Whitehead asked the Christians there whether they wished to return to the Church, they made the pertinent reply that they had never left it! They wanted, rather, the Church to return to them. It is surely then a cause of great thankfulness that it has been given to the Oxford Mission to remove this reproach from the Church in Bengal which has lain upon her for fifteen years, and to bring again her faith, her sacraments and discipline to the children she has used so ill. But at the same time it is a great work, and as it grows must be an increasing responsibility, and therefore adds force to the cry which again and again has come from Calcutta for a large and steady increase in the Mission staff.

To one who is familiar with Church work in English country districts the work in Barisal presents, at least outwardly, a great contrast, but a contrast which has its own special attractions. It is a work which exerts over all who enter on it a strange fascination, kindling in them a deep love for the poor, simple, patient souls who, in their poverty and loneliness, and in much ignorance, and with many moral failings, are yet bearing witness, sometimes with startling and beautiful fidelity, to

RIVER SCENE, EASTERN BENGAL.

[*To face, p.* 161.

the faith of Jesus Christ in the midst of a vast heathen population. In the hope that it may kindle the desire in the hearts of some who read it to offer themselves to the Mission for this work, we feel constrained to reprint the following deeply interesting account by Mr. Brown of one of the tours made in the district.

"A land of slow, sad rivers,—an unfinished land, which looks as though only yesterday the fiat had gone forth, 'Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear.' A few miles further south, indeed, it gives up the attempt to call itself *dry* land at all, and confesses itself to be mere slimy, muddy jungle, abandoned to the crocodile and the tiger. Further to the north, where I am going, it is still the normal condition of the country to be under water for the greater part of the year: such is the nature of this vast delta of the Ganges —a triangle whose base from Chittagong on the east to Calcutta on the west covers some two hundred and fifty miles, and which only at its northern apex reaches a consistency where you can be sure of your footing all the year round.

"And yet it is a wonderful country in one respect, and that is in the richness of its soil. It is like Egypt after a full Nile. It supports an

immense semi-aquatic population. Here they come, tumbling about amongst the rice-fields, all the little children running to see the daily wonder of the steamer, splashing and dancing with delight in their mother-nakedness as it sends up a wave for them to roll about in. Such sweet little wistful faces! At first I try to look at each one and think of the life that lies before him—the long, patient labour of the fields, like those men one sees yonder planting out their rice with the water up above their waists—the small modicum of knowledge that will come to him, and then his eternal destiny. One by one I look into their faces; but now they come crowding too thick for me to do this any more. I am told that this small division of the district contains two-and-a-half millions of people. I seem to have seen almost that number to-day, and one's brain sinks back bewildered and fatigued at the thought of them all, till I recall that beautiful saying, 'Only the Infinite Pity is equal to the infinite pathos of human life.' Perhaps such a day of idleness and dreams is not the worst preparation for a spell of missionary work.

"Arrived at Barisal, I was taken in by our good friend the magistrate—a faithful son of the Church, whose spiritual eye is not dimmed by residence

amongst the heathen or by the fewness of his opportunities for divine worship. There is always something very touching in ministering to the 'two or three' who gather together in these out-of-the-way Indian stations for their rare privilege of receiving the Bread of Life, and the Sunday here was consequently a bright one. On Monday we were to plunge into the unknown. I found that a huge house-boat, of something very like the well-known Thames build, had been provided for me and my expected companion; but as he did not turn up, I should have had it all to myself had not a Christian named Jogendra Chandra Chakravarti volunteered to accompany me—'faithful Jogen,' as I soon learnt to call him, for he looked after all my wants with the greatest kindness and care. With us was a cook, an unkempt native of Barisal, and the boat was manned by a *manjï* and seven *mallahs*—all Musalmans—with whom I became very friendly in the course of the voyage.

"Barisal is the centre of a large district, and is thronged with schoolboys and college students, and one does not escape from them without a lecture. 'We want to hear something for our moral improvement' is the form in which the request comes. So after the inevitable lecture and dinner, I was ready about 9 p.m. to make a start in our comfortable boat it

being arranged that we should travel all night. That being the case, I was not surprised when I awoke some time in the small hours of the morning to find that the boat was at anchor, and we had come only a mile or two. The *manji* of course had an excellent excuse, and it was not till daylight that we really got under way, thus reaching Wuzeerpore at midday instead of in the early morning. Here we had our first and only accident. The wind and the current together caught the boat as it was trying to get into a certain creek, and the huge monster swung with considerable force against the bank. A crash, a groan, a noise of broken glass, and I rushed into the cabin to see what had happened. There I saw a heap of things on the floor, sprinkled here and there with dabs of blood, and amidst them the poor cook curled up into a very forlorn-looking bundle. However, on investigation things did not prove so bad as they looked. The crash had only meant the breaking of one small pane of glass; the blood was from the cook's nose, which had come into contact with the glass, but had not sustained any very serious injury; and the net result was only to give him rather more of a brigandish appearance than before. He was, however, very sorry for himself, and indulged in fever for the next few days.

VILLAGE SCENE WITH SHALTIS.

"From Wuzeerpore to Dhamsar, our first village, is only about four miles, but those four miles were not easy to accomplish, since the rains were late this year, and the fields were too wet to walk over, and yet not wet enough in all places for a boat. So, leaving the big boat behind me, I got into a smaller one, in which we accomplished about three-quarters of the journey, and then were met by Alok Sircar, the poet, with a still smaller boat, into which I was transferred. It was propelled by his son, Shitol, a nice, bright-looking lad of about sixteen. In this boat it was necessary to sit tight and not cough or sneeze, if you did not want to find yourself struggling in the water amongst the long stalks of the rice plants, through which we were making our way. The water got more and more shallow, and Shitol had sometimes to get out and push the boat over a ridge, but they would not hear of my doing the same. Soon we came upon little Gopal, his brother, with eyes like a startled fawn, plunging hip deep into the water to get to school; and at last the boat had to give up the attempt to make any further progress, and the journey had to be finished by all of us wading through the mud.

"At Dhamsar we were received by Chandra, the catechist of the whole district, and the chief

leader of the movement which has compelled us to take up this work. He is a most thoughtful, earnest man, and as he accompanied me on the journey every day I felt an increasing affection and respect for him. For many years he has been working his way towards the Church of England, having been much helped by his great friend, the French Roman Catholic priest, who lives at a neighbouring village; and this year, after instruction from Mr. Whitehead, he was confirmed by the Bishop. The story of the return of these people to the Church has been already told, and I need not allude to it any more, except to say that, having started with the feeling that it is a great pity, if it can possibly be avoided, for two bodies of Christians to be working in the same field, I came to the conclusion before the end, that we should have been doing a great wrong if we had refused to come to the aid of these members of our Church. The Baptists are naturally rather sore; but, after all, the people are not 'their people' nor 'our people,' as missionaries are apt rather unwarrantably to suppose, but have their own conscientious convictions, which must be respected; and certainly there are many who feel that the baptism of their children, and confirmation, are privileges which they have a right to claim.

Enough, perhaps, has been said of the abandonment fifteen years ago of some three thousand members of our Church, leaving them no choice between remaining without any Christian services at all and joining the Baptists. Of these three thousand, I heard in one place of two hundred and fifty, and in another of three hundred, on whom this policy had the effect of sending them back to Hinduism, and probably one-fourth of the whole number are in this condition. This is the saddest part of the whole matter, and I have not hitherto succeeded in tracing any of these people.

"At Dhamsar we had services in the open air, as the church is not yet built. One inconvenience of this is that in the morning the sun is apt to get hot before you have finished, and in the evening it is necessary to seize the psychological moment between the heat of the afternoon and the approach of darkness, while at this time of the year the rain is always liable to disconcert your arrangements. However, the people are wonderfully patient and good-tempered, and all these little difficulties are easily got over. On this and subsequent visits I learnt greatly to love many of these Dhamsar people. At Christmas I spent a week with them—the best house, made of mud and mats, being given up to me; and if

I had been a king in his palace I could not have been treated more royally. I brought a box full of little presents for the children—balls, knives, dolls, etc. They had never seen such things, and were lost in astonishment and delight. Amongst other things was a Jack-in-the-box with a hideous black face—value about sixpence. The fame of it spread far and wide, and a Hindu woman from a neighbouring village made a journey, as she said, 'to see Ketu.' Now Ketu is a monster of Hindu mythology, who swallows up the sun and the moon, and I should not be surprised to find that Jack-in-the-box enshrined in a temple and worshipped on my next visit.

"One effect of the moisture of the climate is that the children begin to smoke almost from the cradle. At a village called Narikelbari—'the House of the Cocoa-nut'—the following dialogue took place between myself and a small urchin of five: 'Have you had your morning pipe?' 'I have.' 'How long have you been a smoker?' 'Oh, for years!'

"Their occasional excursions into the Bible in search of names for their children have often a touch of genius about them. A family of four boys were called Samson, Jonah (pronounced Junus), 'Paulus,' and then—as though all Jewish and

Christian literature had been exhausted—they fell back on the Hindu Ganesh. This, however, is outdone by a family in the Sunderbâns, where the boys are called Benjamin—the eldest!—Reuben, Judah, and Herod! Others like to combine the law, the prophets, and the gospel: thus three brothers were called Paul, Gershom, and Micah, and a boy of another family rejoiced in the names of Seth Titus. As a rule, however, they are satisfied with such names as are borne by Hindus, in spite of their heathenish associations, and in this, I think, they are justified by New Testament precedent.

"At the evening service I gave an instruction in Bengali. Here my pride received a great blow. I asked Chandra whether the people had understood me. 'Yes,' he said, 'they understood you—because the people *here* are accustomed to Englishmen's Bengali.' After that I thought he had better interpret for me. After service they entertained us with the *Pilgrim's Progress*, a sort of 'oratorio' founded on Bunyan's great allegory. These *játras*, as they are called, are very popular among the people, being a form of religious entertainment quite indigenous to Hinduism. A party will often make a vow to sing through the whole of the *Ramayan* or *Mahabharata*—the great Hindu epics;

and the performance takes several weeks. The *Pilgrim's Progress* did not take several weeks, but it took a good many more hours than I could keep awake for. By midnight they had only got as far as the Slough of Despond, which 'Christian' thought a very good place in which to have a quiet smoke of the favourite 'hubble-bubble' or *hookah*. The boys sang as though they would split their throats. The whole composition has been versified by Alok Sircar, one of our old Church people, and his four sons are the chief musicians—Bihari, Shitol, Gopal, and Nipal.

"I must tell you a little story about Gopal, a dear little boy of about ten. It will illustrate how among these Christians of the second or third generation the conscience can become tenderly sensitive, whereas amongst Hindus, such is the baneful effect of the caste system, that our great difficulty is to discover whether they have any conscience at all. On one of my visits I missed a small toy from my box, and discovered that it had been carried off by Gopal's youngest brother, an infant too small to be responsible for the theft. I sent Shitol to say that it must be given back, and that he must teach his little brother not to steal. Shitol, however, misunderstood me and gave the message to Gopal. Presently there came back

to me not only the toy in question, but everything I had ever given to Gopal—a picture or two, a knife, one or two toys—precious things, which had evidently been fondly treasured. Not knowing of the mistake, I was at a loss to understand this, and sent for Gopal to explain. For a long time he stood by me silently weeping, unable to speak; at last it came out, amid many sobs, that he had been accused of the theft, and, deeply wounded by such a suspicion, had determined to surrender all his treasures. Of course the matter was cleared up, and with some difficulty I was able to restore his peace of mind and persuade him to take back his property.

"From Dhamsar we went to Morakhati, examined the school, and held a service with the Christians. A Hindu boy named Rojoni made great friends with me, and his father, Fedoo, brought a very acceptable offering of milk. We often get presents from the Christians, but it is rare for Hindus to bring us anything, and I appreciated the courtesy accordingly. Thence, through a beautiful shaded glen, where broad plantain leaves spread their shade, undamaged by the wind which so often cuts them into strips, to Potihar, where we found the old reader, Mohan Modon, a full account of whom appeared in Mr. Whitehead's first letter from

Barisal. This is the only place where the Roman Catholics are working alongside of us, they having, with the greatest courtesy, yielded to the wish of our own people to return to us. Potihar is a small place, with but a few Christian families, only one of whom is of our Church, and, but for the good old reader, whom we cannot desert, we should hardly think it necessary to keep up a station there. It is a great comfort to me to feel that our coming has not multiplied the divisions among the Christians in the district, for, whereas before there were Roman Catholics and Baptists, there are now practically only the Baptists and ourselves. The Romanists have never done very much here, and they will now, I think, concentrate their work in one or two places which lie quite out of our track.

"Dhandoba, the next place, is the old head-quarters of the Mission. Here is a noble old man, Dhononjoy, bent nearly double with age, who for fifteen years resisted all solicitations to be rebaptised, and has lived to welcome back his own Church. On my first visit here I could only find two children who could say the Lord's Prayer, but when I went again at Easter, six months later, I found a splendid school of eighty children, even the tiniest of whom could repeat the Lord's Prayer and the Creed, and many of them were well instructed

AN INDIAN VILLAGE.

[*To face p.* 173.

in the Catechism, besides secular learning. There were also some bright Musalman lads, who petitioned me that they might be allowed to have some Christian instruction given to them. All this is the work of my 'faithful Jogen' and another man, named Hira Lal Sircar, who have worked here with the greatest possible zeal and diligence. Our plan is to let all who will come to the school, whether Christians or not, but not to give religious instruction to the non-Christians unless they ask for it. In many cases they do ask for it, as here, and then I feel sure it is received with a much better grace than if it were forced down their throats. There are many hopeful Hindu boys in the schools; at Shuagram one of them, fourteen years old, has wrung from his reluctant parents their consent to his being baptised, and I hope to baptise him on my next visit.

"Near Dhandoba is the Hindu village or small town of Goela, where our huge boat had to stay while we went in a smaller boat to Dhandoba. One day I was rather unwell, and had to stay at home with the boat while Chandra went to the Christians to prepare them for my coming the next day. Here the *manji* (the Musalman boatman) made a brilliant suggestion. He said: 'Sahib, why should you trouble yourself to go all round the

district in this way? Let us keep the boat here, and you stay in it, and send the Babu (Chandra) to do the work'—a suggestion very characteristic of India. Our next halt was at a village called Torun Sen. Here the good French father has sold his chapel to us, and let his people depart with his blessing. He appears to have solved for himself in our favour the question which has so long been agitating the authorities at Rome. 'The Church of England'—so his words have been reported to me by the people—'is not far from the truth. They have fourteen annas to the rupee, whereas the Baptists have only one anna. But we say,' added my informants, 'that the Church of England has sixteen annas and the Roman Church fourteen.' At this place there was a Hindu to be baptised—three had been preparing, but two of them held back at the last moment. On our way to the place an old lady came up to us in a boat, and asked whether we had seen her 'child,' who, she had heard, was going to join the Christians. I entered into a conversation with her, urging her to come too, and offered her some fruit, which she rejected with great disdain, thinking that I wanted to bribe her. To my great amusement, the Musalman *manji* came to our assistance. His exhortation was a very simple one: 'Give up worshipping

Saitan,' said he, 'and worship Christ.' This too, however, failed in its effect. (When I asked the *manji* afterwards whether he would worship Christ, he wanted to know whether it would mean giving up Mahomed.) Arrived at Torun Sen, the Christians collected, the old lady's 'child' appeared—a strong-looking man of about thirty—and I began the baptismal service. In the middle of it there was a whoop and a yell, and a figure threw itself flat upon the ground in front of me, straight as a tree falls, and began banging its head against the floor. It was the old lady herself whom I had seen in the boat. She was, I believe, trying to kill herself; but fortunately the mud floor was newly made, and she did not do her head much harm. She, however, made such a noise that it was impossible to proceed with the service, so I suggested that we should adjourn to the tank, where the baptism was to take place. We both went down into the water, but three times the old mother flung her arms round her son's neck and succeeded by main force in dragging him up the bank. It was a singular scene, blended of tragedy and comedy. Beneath her eccentric way of expressing herself was the heart-breaking sorrow of a mother who felt that her son was being lost to her for ever. The man behaved with wonderful patience, and only at the

last shook her off a little roughly. She lay moaning on the ground; and the Hindus present, who mostly seemed to be on our side, prevented her from interrupting the service any more. One of them said to me afterwards, 'We are all coming soon.' We then went down into the water once more, and I asked the man whether he was quite firm in wishing to be baptised then. He said he was, and answered the questions in the service calmly and distinctly; so I baptised him. I have seen him several times since, and he remains steady. He was married this year by Mr. Whitehead to a Christian widow—another blow, I fear, to his mother, to whom, as a Hindu, widow marriage is an abomination. She does not at present show any sign of following his example, but I trust we may yet see the fruit of the many prayers which have been offered for her.

"With a fresh breeze and a glowing sky we sailed away that evening over the apparently solid land of the rice-fields into the northern division of the district, which is under a different reader, Shashadar Chakravarti by name. He is a much younger man than Chandra, and has not the same ripeness of judgment; but he has an abundant supply of energy, a quality which is not always prominent in our Bengali Mission workers. Our

first halt was at his own village, Shuagram, where we found his gentle and courteous old father, so graphically described in Mr. Whitehead's letter The boat came to anchor in the garden, and in the narrow space between it and the house we had to have our service, no church having been yet built. For baptism it was very convenient, as we had only to go down a few steps into the water. We always baptise by immersion, both to avoid 'offence' to the Baptists and because there really seems no reason why in India this, the primary intention of the Church, should not be observed. This district is much more compact than the southern one, there being twelve villages within a radius of about six miles. Consequently the time occupied in getting about with our lumbering old house-boat was not so long, and I was able to see more of the people. On my second visit, after the Bishop had held his confirmation at the beginning of this year, we had one hundred and thirty-eight Communicants, which, with eighty-one in the other district, makes two hundred and nineteen. There must be nearly as many more waiting to be confirmed, and the total number of Church people is about two thousand. At one place where I went I was told there were a number of former members of the Church who had not yet come back.

When I asked them what they were going to do, they said, with a charming frankness, 'We are going to wait and see whether you will deceive us again.' At Pakhor an old man died a few months ago, saying he was very sorry he had not lived to see his own Church re-established in the country. His widow and children were among those whom I baptised.

"Our present great want is that of churches and schools. These are of very simple construction, in most places being made only of mats; but the question is complicated by the fact that in this part of the district if any one wants to build a house, he first has to build an island to put it on. This about doubles the expense. Also the number of villages already occupied is very large—thirty or more; and of course we must look forward to extension. In five or six central places we must have 'cathedrals' of corrugated iron; these, with the land required for them, will cost from £60 to £80 each. I calculate that at the present stage of the work £500 would supply the Mission with all the 'plant' it requires. Towards keeping up the work I am very thankful to hear that the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel has made a grant of £400 per annum, but I think about twice that sum will be needed if we are to work the district efficiently.

ONE OF THE OXFORD MISSION COUNTRY CHAPELS.

"The last place which I visited was Kolligram, an outlying village which it took us one and a half days to get to by boat. On our way we caught a great number of tortoises. When I say 'we,' my part consisted in looking on from the boat, while one of the men, who was very clever at it, ran along the bank, and whenever he saw a tortoise sitting near the water made a jump for it. The tortoise jumped at the same time; but in two cases out of three he would catch it in his hands before it could dive to the bottom. They are eight or ten inches in length, and are said to be very good eating, but in common with the pig are abhorred by Musalmans (Lev. xi. 29), though Hindus eat them. Kolligram is a large place, where we have some two hundred Christians. I found them keeping school under a tree, and assembling for worship in the very narrow space supplied by the verandah of a mud house. At this distant village only seven people have been confirmed, but they all came to Holy Communion, after we had had a searching preparatory service the day before. This indeed was the chief object of my tour, to admit those who had been confirmed to their first communion; and none were allowed to communicate unless they had gone through a preparation as careful as it was possible to make it in the time,

including very full questions on the Ten Commandments. They were not expected to make answer publicly, but many touching acknowledgments of sin were made either to me or to the readers, and some quarrels were composed. Altogether I do earnestly hope that the reorganisation of the Church here will be of real spiritual benefit to the people, for that can be our only ultimate justification for entering upon a field where so much Christian work has been done before. It distresses me greatly that for some time to come they must be without a resident priest, while we at Calcutta are two or three days' journey from them.

"I must tell you one more story which will illustrate the simple character of this rural Church. While I was at Dhamsar on my last visit, a man came in from a distant village to say that when the Bishop came for the confirmation in February his steam-launch stuck on a mudbank just opposite his (the speaker's) house, and he took that as a providential indication that he ought to join the Church of which the Bishop was the head; that he had also had several dreams bearing in the same direction; moreover, that when he went to his own minister to ask him about it, the latter only replied with a Bengali proverb, meaning that where there is something original there will be

imitation, and that, going home and thinking over it, he had come to the conclusion that the Church was the original and the Baptists the imitation. Finally, what clinched the matter was that eight persons were saved in the Ark, and his family consisted of exactly eight persons. Of course he could not be received on such grounds; but I gave him some instruction, and told him to wait and pray, and it may be that when the Bishop comes again he will be able to fulfil his wish, and receive him into the Ark of Christ's Church.

"There are naturally many difficulties and hindrances, some of which I have hinted at; but on the whole it is a great happiness to work amongst people of such simple faith. Though one can hardly expect them to see it in this light, I feel that the present movement is largely the result of the fidelity with which the Baptist missionaries have done their work, and I pray that we may be able to continue it in such a spirit as to hasten the time when we shall be reunited under one Lord, in one faith, by one baptism."

Surely an appeal such as this account makes must meet with a response from the Church at home, and lead at least some priests to offer themselves for a work which, under the charge of the Oxford Mission, has been so blessed and has so

rapidly increased. Moreover, the desire which Mr. Brown expressed for a house belonging to the Mission, where a priest could permanently reside, is now (1898) on the way to be fulfilled, the Mission having decided to buy some land and to build a house where three or four members of the Brotherhood of the Epiphany will be able to live.

CHAPTER VIII

ANNUS INFAUSTUS.

"Let one more attest—
I have lived, seen God's hand through a life-time, and all for best."

THE year on which we are now entering was one of losses in the organisation at home, and of public anxiety and trouble in India which more or less affected the Oxford Mission. At the close of 1896 Miss Murray, who for ten years had laboured with unremitting zeal on behalf of the Mission, was obliged to resign the office of General Secretary. At a meeting of the Committee held on December 10th a resolution was unanimously passed in which the Committee expressed their high appreciation of her devoted work and their deep regret that she felt herself obliged to resign her charge. Miss Murray's place was taken by Miss Edith Argles. The early months of 1897 brought another and a very heavy loss to the Mission in the sudden and unexpected death of Dr. Wilson, Warden of Keble College and Vice-Chairman of the Home Committee. He had been elected to this office

on the appointment of Dr. Talbot, now Bishop of Rochester, to the Vicarage of Leeds. From that time (1892) to the day of his death the affairs of the Mission were the subject of his constant thought, and the last public act of his life was to preside at a meeting of the Finance committee. Among the many works of religious and philanthropic activity in which he was interested there were few to which he devoted more ungrudging attention, few which he believed to be of more importance to the Church and to the nation. His tact, great judgment, and power of sympathy were of the greatest value in solving many difficult and important questions connected with the work of the Mission, and his death was a heavy loss, not only generally to the Church at home, but to the Oxford Mission in particular.

In Calcutta, and indeed in all India, 1897 will long be remembered as an *Annus infaustus*. It opened with famine and pestilence; its central months were marked by earthquake, murder, and riot, and the cloud of war hung heavy on the north-west frontier. Of the war, nearly two thousand miles away, those in Calcutta only heard the echo, much as we did in England, through the newspapers. The famine, again, only touched Bengal lightly, while the plague which was devastating

other parts of India most unexpectedly avoided Calcutta. But nevertheless the Mission in the person of Mr. Lloyd had its share in contributing help to the plague-stricken districts. When the pestilence was at its height at Bombay, and continual reports came of the scarcity of nurses in the hospitals, Mr. Lloyd volunteered to go and do what he could to help the All Saints' Sisters in their work. His offer was gladly accepted, and he spent the greater part of the hot weather and rains on plague duty of various kinds at Bombay itself and at Kutch Mandvi. His work in Bombay involved a great deal of night-nursing under conditions of the most trying kind; and when the plague decreased there he was sent to Kutch Mandvi, a town of about twenty thousand inhabitants, in a native state, on search duty—searching for cases of plague in the native houses, accompanied by detachments of Sepoys and policemen. It was hard work, but to the great joy of the Mission Mr. Lloyd returned to Calcutta not only safe and sound, but looking better and stronger for his labours.

The earthquake and the riots came home to the Mission more nearly, as they were both felt in their full force in Calcutta. Of the earthquake a member of the Mission writes as follows:

"On that memorable Saturday afternoon, June 12th, I was paying a call in the business part of Calcutta when we heard a rumbling, which might have been that of a very heavy waggon. My host and I rushed out into the compound. The sight which first struck us was that of a large swinging lamp, swaying backwards and forwards a yard or more in the verandah. Others reported that a similar sight, though inverted, was to be seen wherever there was a tall chimney. 'The massy earth' heaved beneath one's feet as though it had been a ship's deck. This continued for nearly five minutes by the clock. I don't think any of us realised at the time how serious the earthquake was; but when on my way home I passed through some of the principal streets of the city, and saw how there was scarcely a house of any size which had not received some damage, I began to understand that we had undergone an awful calamity. It is said that there are seventy feet of thick mud, which forms a sort of spongy foundation for the whole of Calcutta. This would be a protection against any ordinary earthquake, and no doubt was in great part a protection against this. Nevertheless, that short five minutes had plenty to show for itself. Nearly every church in Calcutta lost a portion at least of its steeple.

Very few three-storied houses retained their upper floors intact; houses that were old in nearly all cases lost a part of their walls; in some cases a verandah or a front wall fell into the street bodily, revealing the inner apartments. Yet it would be a great exaggeration to say, as some of the local papers did, that Calcutta was in ruins. Two days after the earthquake one might pass along the street, and except for a house or two under repair, and the truncated condition of the church spires, one could hardly notice any difference. Business on the Monday, following that Saturday, was in full swing as usual.

"The portions of the city which fared best were the 'lowly cots' of the poor. It is a curious feature in all Indian cities that alongside the most magnificent *pukka* houses of stone or brick you may always find little huts, scarcely more than a man's height, made of mud or matting. These suffered by the earthquake not at all. And in all this crowded city, with a population only second to that of London, but three deaths were reported from falling houses. This must certainly be looked upon as a wonderful deliverance, especially when we consider the many instances of hair-breadth escapes which have since come to light. After surveying the ruins in the city, you may imagine

that I walked back in some anxiety to the Mission House. On reaching a point where I thought I could have seen it, my worst fears seemed to be confirmed, but as I walked on a few steps our lofty cross emerged from behind a house, and I knew that all was safe. Indeed, our well-built, iron-beamed house had not received a single crack, and this in spite of the fact that it is the highest building in this part of the city. Well may we thank God for its preservation and our own!

"Those who have not been in an earthquake can hardly imagine the utter feeling of helplessness which comes over one at the time. There is absolutely nothing to be done except get out of the way of falling buildings, and wait till it is over. I can fancy it leading to the conversion of an atheist, for the man who has least trust in God cannot help feeling at such a time that there is none else to trust in. The Hindus fully appreciate the religious aspect of such a calamity. Unfortunately the gods they call upon then are those which they have been accustomed to call upon at other times. Still, one cannot but hope that it has brought home the solemnity of life to some of us, and made us feel that we are not able 'to make one hair white or black.' Anything which

deepens the sense of responsibility must in the end tell in favour of the true religion.

"Two instances of real heroism in connection with the earthquake must not pass unnoticed. One was that of the nurses at the hospitals, who, when the buildings were rocking to and fro and were expected every moment to fall, stood by the patients who were unable to leave their beds, encouraging them and cheering them at the risk of their own lives. The Eurasians are often spoken of as a poor race, but we think the heroism of these Eurasian women should not be forgotten. 'I am so sorry I was not in the hospital myself at the time,' was the comment of the Sister who told us of this incident. The other was that of one of the Clewer Sisters, in charge of the European orphanage. All the girls had rushed out; but when they collected in the compound, it was found that one of the teachers was absent, whereupon the brave little Sister ran up all the way to the top of the house, three storeys, amidst the crashing of walls and timber, to look for her, only to find that she had slipped out by another way. That, it seems to us, was a deed that deserved the V.C."

The occasion of the riots which took place later in the year, in which Mr. Nanson and Mr. Conway were both injured, though fortunately not seriously

so, was the decision of the courts against a man who had squatted on some land which did not belong to him and on which he had built a little shed, which he called a mosque. The claim was as bad in Mohammedan as it was in English law, which was afterwards acknowledged by the leaders of the Mohammedan community in Calcutta. Nevertheless, the masses of Mohammedans, who are always excited by any religious question, became roused, and there is much evidence to show that the excitement was studiously fanned by a low class of Mullahs, who are in immediate contact with the people. The word went forth that no Hindu was to be attacked, only Europeans and Christians, and this in spite of the fact that the owner of the land in question was a Hindu. Consequently, at all street corners stood men with clubs and stones, vowing that no European should pass that way without receiving hurt. There is, however, no proof that they meant deliberate murder; probably they did not wish to do more than was necessary to intimidate the authorities, though of course no one could foresee where things would stop when once they began. Of what followed with regard to the attack on Mr. Conway and Mr. Nanson we will let Mr. Brown speak.

"On the evening of the first day a message

was brought that Conway had been attacked and left for dead in the street. We went out at once to the place, about a mile from the Mission House, and there could only learn that he had been seen to be hit on the head and several other places with stones. Our next visit was to the neighbouring hospital, and we found our first grain of comfort when we learnt from the Sister in charge that nothing had been seen of him there. We then went back to the Mission House, passing a second time through the rioters, who for some reason or other did not attack us. Our hope that he might have got back in our absence was disappointed, and we made our way through the crowd a third time to look for him at St. James's School ; and there at last we found him, not much the worse except for a black eye, where he had been hit by a stone, and a sprained knee, which was the result of an old football accident, and had given way again in the tumult. A brick, which had been thrown down upon him from a house, had been warded off by his large pith hat ; otherwise he might not have lived to tell the tale. We then got him into our carriage and drove back to the Mission House, being able to avoid the places of danger owing to the advice of a friendly Bengali Babu. Meanwhile, Nanson, at Bishop's College, four miles away, had heard a highly

coloured account of Conway's accident, and drove over at once with a friend, hoping either to rescue him or to give us warning. They were in an open dog-cart, and, as they reached the place where we had passed only a few minutes before, they were saluted with a shower of stones, and arrived at the Mission House bleeding in one or two places, but not seriously hurt. Going back, they fared worse, and for nearly a mile had to run the gauntlet of a mob throwing large stones as hard as they could at the cart, the pony, and themselves. At the end of this they were a mass of cuts and bruises, which laid them up for some days, but fortunately no vital part was injured. The general result of two days' rioting was that some dozen or twenty Europeans were more or less seriously hurt, but none killed. How many of the rioters were killed will, I suppose, be never known. The officials were judiciously reticent, and the bodies were so speedily disposed of by their companions that probably those who know most about it can only make a guess. One estimate said seven persons, another fifteen hundred.

"The worst effect of the whole has been the bitter feeling it has left behind. The relation between natives and Europeans is never of the best. and anything which serves to embitter it is a

calamity to both. As for ourselves, I don't think we have much to complain of. We scarcely realise how much we owe to the protection of the English Government except when that protection is for a moment suspended. Missionaries in China and some parts of Africa are face to face with death every day of their lives. We, on the contrary, have enjoyed the benefits of the *Pax Britannica* for every day but two since the Mission was started. Whether this state of things is as good for the spiritual interests of our work and of ourselves as a more precarious condition might be I can hardly say; certain it is that in temporal matters we could scarcely be better off than we are."

However that may be, we who watch the work of the Mission here in England cannot but pray that the political and temporal course of events in India may be so ordered in God's providence that the Church may be enabled to continue her work there in quietness and peace.

We have now reached the record of last year (1898), and it is too soon to say what has been the result of the year as a whole on the work of the Mission. But from all accounts which have reached us, it is apparent that the work has not suffered from the disturbances and the anxieties of which mention has been made above, and that in every department

there is solid and steady progress. The Rev. Charles McLaughlan, of Bishop Hatfield's Hall, Durham, who went out to join the Mission at the end of 1897, was a welcome addition to the staff, though unfortunately it proved no gain numerically, as Mr. Campion was in the early part of this year invalided home.

One other departure remains to be chronicled—namely that of Bishop Johnson, who for twenty-two years, as Bishop of Calcutta and Metropolitan of India, has done so much for the organisation of the Indian Church on true Catholic principles. This is not the place to dwell upon that work as it affected the Church at large, or on the great and important changes which the Bishop brought about in the twenty-two years of his episcopate. It is of his relation to the Oxford Mission that we have to speak. That relation could not have been happier. It was in response to his call that the Mission was founded. He has looked upon it as his child from the first, and has been its steady friend and wise counsellor through evil report and through good report. No serious step has ever been taken by the Mission without his advice and approval. "Do nothing without the Bishop," has been its consistent policy; and it may safely be said that there is no institution in the Diocese, which

CHAPEL ON THE ROOF OF THE HOSPITAL.

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has been more intimately associated with the episcopate, which came to an end in 1898, than the Oxford Mission to Calcutta, and no institution which has greater cause to mourn its termination. Nor was this association between the Bishop and the Mission a merely general one. It was born of the personal interest which he took in every individual member—of the real and unfailing fatherly care and affection with which he watched over, not only their work, but their health, and with which he shared in all their joys and sorrows. This called out on their part a loyal devotion and a reverence and love which were deep and true, and which have made every one who has worked in the Mission feel that, whatever else they may have gained, one thing at least of permanent value has become theirs, "that they have known the Bishop."

Almost his last act before leaving Calcutta for good was to pay a visit to the hostel, an account of which we will give in an extract from a letter of one of the members of the Mission who was present:

"This (May 10th) has been a sad day for us. We have just been down to the river to say good-bye to our dear Bishop, who sailed for England this summer. Last Saturday he most

kindly came to pay us a farewell visit at the hostel. We were all there, of course. Soon after he arrived, and before we could finish tea, which we had on the roof, a heavy thunderstorm came on, so the Bishop suggested that we should retire into our little chapel and sing evensong. This we accordingly did, and afterwards the Bishop gave us his blessing. As he was getting into his carriage to go away he said he should often think of that 'dear little service on the roof.' It is quite certain that we shall also. His going away leaves a very large blank space; how it is to be filled up we cannot at present imagine. He has been like a father to every one of us, as you know. He has left us a big photograph of himself, framed for the library, the leather medicine-case he had when he first came out to India, and the old umbrella (!) which he brought with him on Saturday. And he has taken away with him to England a somewhat large portion of the heart of each of us. It sounds as though he had the better of the bargain; but perhaps that is not true, for we have, in addition to the three presents, the remembrance of all that he has been to us, and the inspiring influence of the example of his life."

It is perhaps appropriate that this sketch of the Oxford Mission should close with the episcopate

of Bishop Johnson, who under God called it into being. Seventeen years is not a long time in the life of an individual, it is still less in the life of an institution; and yet as we look back over those seventeen years what a great work has been done! Compare the Oxford Mission as it began its work in 1881 and as it presents itself to us to-day. It started in a hired house, with a staff of three priests, strange to the work, to the language, to the country, and to the people; it has to-day a magnificent house of its own, standing in the very centre of the native and student quarter of the city, with a staff of nine priests[1] and two laymen, numbering among them men who have gained not only an intimate knowledge of the chief missionary problems with which the Church has to deal in Bengal, but also a close and deep sympathy with the people among whom they work, and a real grasp of the many religious and philosophical problems which are presented by modern Hinduism.

They have, again, gathered round them a large and increasing band of loyal and devoted Bengali priests, catechists, and schoolmasters, as well as scholars and students; not "agents," as some

[1] This number, alas! has through the recent appointment of Mr. Whitehead to the See of Madras, the return of Mr. McLaughlin to England, and the illness of Mr. Conway, been practically reduced to six.

missionary bodies so mistakenly term them, but fellow-workers in the highest and truest sense, men knit to the Mission and the college by the closest ties of common worship, common sympathy and aim, and common love. Through them and with them the Oxford Mission has enormously raised the standard of spiritual life among the native Christian congregations in Calcutta. This alone would have justified its existence when it is remembered that, in the opinion of all competent observers, the conversion of India as a whole will depend much more upon the native ministry than upon European missions; though these for a long time will be absolutely necessary to support and organise the work of the native Church. They have, further, established a complete system of education, starting from the primitive village schools in the country districts and mounting by successive and connected steps through the Industrial School on the one hand to the higher branches of the mechanical trades, and through the High School on the other to the degrees of the Calcutta University: while they have, in connection with the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, their own boarding-schools, their college for resident students, their theological class, all of which are entirely filled with native Christians, and for the

VILLAGE SCENE AT LAERTHORE IN THE SUNDERLANDS.

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most part are housed in ample and well-equipped buildings.

In the districts of the Sunderbâns and Barisal they have revived large missions which had been only partially cared for, or altogether neglected, and by persevering labour and firm discipline, and above all by the faithful teaching of the full Catholic Faith, have brought back real Church life to the congregations under their care—a life which is showing itself in continuous growth. By their lectures at the Mission House and by individual intercourse they have year by year been patiently preparing the ground and sowing the seed which, if as yet it has not borne fruit in any large number of conversions, has, it is acknowledged on all sides, had a real influence upon the native society. In the *Epiphany* they have made a paper by means of which they reach a far wider circle than by either lectures or interviews—a paper which has not only an acknowledged position in the eyes of the European and native press of Calcutta, but which is read in many other parts of India, and which is appreciated by friend and foe alike for its ability, its courtesy, and the courage and fairness with which it deals with every question submitted to it. In the hostel they have solved a problem which has baffled the Government and the University

of Calcutta; and they have provided an object lesson as to how the present lamentable condition of the Calcutta students can be improved, as well as creating an instrument for missionary work the promise of which each year becomes more sure. Lastly, we venture to say, and we think that many in India would support us in saying it, that by their life and devotion, their earnestness and zeal, their theological and general intellectual ability, and not least by their unswerving loyalty to Catholic Faith and discipline, they have had no small influence on the development and deepening of the life of the Church in India as a whole.

This we claim is a record of work of which even the University of Oxford, with its immemorial traditions and its splendid services to the Faith, may well be proud. For the Oxford Mission, be it remembered, if not officially, yet definitely and distinctly represents Oxford to India. Through it the University of Oxford ministers of her intellectual and spiritual wealth to the deep poverty of the University of Calcutta.

Through the Oxford Mission to Calcutta, and through that heroic and splendid enterprise, the Universities' Mission to Central Africa, Oxford is pledged to pay her debt to two great continents. Is that responsibility in any adequate sense

realised? Is that pledge in any adequate degree being redeemed? Can we think so when year after year from both Missions comes the pleading cry, often in vain, for more men—a cry which comes from hearts saddened by seeing opportunities lost which only lack of numbers prevents them from accepting.

We have spoken of the position which the Oxford Mission holds in Calcutta and of its influence upon the native society. To what, it may be asked, is this influence to be chiefly attributed? Not, we feel sure, only or chiefly, to intellectual ability, though the Mission contains, and always has contained, men of the highest intellectual culture. Nor again do we think that it is due to the fact that they live under a definite if simple form of the religious life—though such a life has a great attraction for the Hindu, whose whole mind and nature is profoundly religious. Nor once again is it because they have spoken smooth things of the religious and moral aspects of modern Hinduism; for they have never hesitated to speak their mind plainly and openly about it. These things, not excluding the last—for the power of truthfulness is great even when it goes against age-long conviction—have no doubt done much; but what has given them their real strength has been that from the first they have

shown sympathy to those among whom they have come to live. It is known now that every Bengali, be he high caste or low caste, be he rich or poor, will find a welcome at the Mission House, will be received with courtesy and consideration, and will always be sure of a sympathetic and patient hearing.

The Mission has not fallen into the mistake of thinking that the Bengali Babu is a paragon of virtue, or is competent to be entrusted with all and every form of political responsibility and power. They have gauged his character much more truly. But in forming their estimate of him they have remembered his past history—how he has ever been the conquered and not the conqueror—how in order to maintain his own he has had to live by his wits—and how, as a result, flattery, deception, dishonesty have been his training for centuries. They have realised again that what he is to-day—half-educated, with all the faults which imperfect education brings with it, without any definite belief, and with the weakening of social and moral restraints which comes from the breaking up of the old before it is replaced by the new—is largely the result of circumstances outside his own control, and which have been in a measure forced upon him—forced upon him by ourselves, who are now his severest

critics. For it is to the present system of education, which has been created by the English Government, that the Calcutta Babu owes his existence. This fact alone lays upon England an enormous responsibility towards the educated classes of India.

What has been and is the result of this system on the young educated Bengali we have already shown. It has engaged the anxious attention not only of missionaries, but of every thoughtful administrator in the Indian Government. Whatever the remedies may be which may avert what is at present rapidly becoming a moral disaster, this at least is certain, that there is one essential qualification for all who would successfully touch the problem, and that is sympathy, and not merely criticism. It is just this which in our mind makes the outlook, not only as regards the educated native classes in Calcutta, but as regards our relation to the whole people of India, so anxious.

No one, we think, can have any real knowledge of India without a deep sense of the splendid work which is being done by the great Indian Civil Service, the finest service, we venture to say, which the world has ever seen. This work is recognised by the Indian people ; they thoroughly appreciate the benefit of our rule ; they are bound to us by self-interest ; they would support us against any

foreign invader ; but—and the fact was admitted by Lord Dufferin himself, than whom few have known India better—the people do not like us. The reason is that with all our real desire to do what is right towards them, with all our real wish and continuous effort to benefit them, we have not shown sympathy. As a rule the average Anglo-Indian treats the native with a discourtesy, we had almost said a rudeness, which, though it is never openly resented, rankles in their heart. In the opinion of those who have known India longest, the separation between the two societies, English and Indian, grows wider instead of narrower. There are, there must be, many difficulties. There is always the underlying difficulty which comes from the relation of a conquered people to its conquerors. There are, again, all the difficulties which arise from differences of creed and social customs, and from the enormous dissimilarity between the mental attitude of the East and of the West, the very virtues of the one race appearing as irritating and annoying qualities in the eyes of the other.

The increasing facilities, again, of intercourse between England and India which might at first sight seem to ensure a better understanding between the two peoples are probaby producing the exactly opposite result. Englishmen do not

live in India as they used to do. It is no longer, as it once was, practically their home for thirty or forty years. It is much more now their place of business, from which they get away on every available opportunity, and as often as they can. This is natural, and we cannot blame them. Again, the exigencies of modern government and the introduction of railways have led to a much more continuous and rapid movement of the government officials from one district to another than in former days; so that the close, intimate, almost paternal relations which used to exist between the rulers and the ruled, each year tend to become less close and less personal. No doubt in many ways the Anglo-Indian has changed for the better, but the fact remains that he is not so near to the people as he formerly was.

It is this nearness, born of personal sympathy, which has been a source of real power of the Oxford Mission. Surely this is worth a great deal, and is a matter which concerns not only the missionary, but every Englishman; for, after all, the only strong foundation on which any rule can permanently rest is that which is laid on the hearts of the people. We do not minimise the difficulties; but the old saying still holds true, "*Noblesse*

oblige." It is because in virtue of our Christian Faith, in virtue of our past heritage, which has made us what we are, we *are* the greater nation, that we are bound by the very sense of our own greatness to be patient, forbearing, and sympathetic towards those over whom we rule.

CHAPTER IX.

CONVERTS.

"a touch divine—
And the sealed eyeball owns the mystic rod;
Visibly through His garden walketh God."

IT will probably have been noticed that in tracing the history of the Mission no mention has been made of any conversions to Christianity from among the students. This omission we have made purposely, because it seemed best to put together in one place what we desire to say upon this subject.

We will at the outset frankly admit that the number of actual students who have been baptised has been very few. But to any one who understands the conditions of the work in Calcutta this is neither surprising nor discouraging.

There is in the mind of many people at home an impatience at what appears to them an undue slowness in the result of foreign missionary work, though, considering the miserably inadequate and languid way in which the Church of England missions are supported both as regards men and

money, the surprise is, not that they should seem to do so little, but that they should achieve anything at all. As a matter of fact, however, Christianity is spreading in India at a far quicker ratio as regards the population than it spread in Europe in the early days of the Church. It must be remembered also that any really systematic effort at missionary work on the part of the Church in India is scarcely one hundred years old—it would be truer to say, scarcely fifty or sixty years old. Paradoxical as it may appear, it is, we believe, also true to say that, to a certain extent, there have been too many baptisms in India, instead of too few. We are learning wiser ways now; but there was a time when it was thought right for a missionary to preach for a few days in a village, baptise any who would accept baptism on the spot, and then leave the newly converted without any instruction or any Christian support for five or six months or longer. The result naturally was that they relapsed into practical heathenism, if indeed they had ever been really converted from it. The work of conversion, if it is to last, cannot be accomplished in that rough-and-ready fashion; it is a plant the soil for which needs much preparation, and the after-growth long and anxious care.

Again, the difficulties connected with conversions

to Christianity vary very greatly in different parts of India and among the different peoples; the aboriginal tribes, for example, being far more open to conviction than the races which have entered India later. Again, the simple country people are easier to deal with than the educated classes, among whom at present there appear to be very special difficulties which oppose the acceptance of the Faith.

Though it may be only transitory, there does, for example, seem in the last few years to have been a distinct attempt to revive philosophic Hinduism. That strange conglomerate known as the Chicago Parliament of Religions undoubtedly did much, if not to rekindle belief in Hinduism in the minds of the students of Calcutta, at least to feed their religious pride. The reports of the reception accorded in America to their representative, the Swami Vivekananda, was at the time in every student's mouth. Hinduism, they said, was going to convert the West, forgetful for the moment of the fact that a Hindu can only be born, he cannot become one by conversion from another faith.

When the Swami returned to Calcutta he was given a most enthusiastic reception, and became for the time a sort of Defender of the Faith. The addresses which he gave on his return served as

the subject of a critical lecture which was given by Mr. Whitehead at the Mission House to a crowded audience. As a rule the Bengali student will listen with an apparent apathy which is at times one of the trials of lecturing; but on this occasion so stirred were they that something like a riot seemed for a few minutes to be imminent, and an excited demonstration in support of Vivekananda took place. Even this, hostile as it was, was preferable to the usual tone of absolute indifference to religious conviction of any kind which so largely prevails among the educated young men in Calcutta at the present time. For the revival of which we have been speaking is not a revival of *belief*, but a kind of pride in the Hindu religion as a national thing, and an organised effort to resist any weakening of its social laws.

Side by side with this exists at present another difficulty—namely, an increasing hostility to what is European and English among the educated classes. Whatever seriously affects the tone and attitude of these classes towards the English has a direct bearing on missionary work. For Christianity and the English Government are very closely bound up together in the minds of the people, even of the educated people, and therefore a growing hostility to the English means also a growing hostility to

Christianity. Many of the political events of the last few years have, again, accentuated this hostile feeling. To give a single example, it is probable that the sympathy with Tilak, an editor of a Bombay paper who was recently imprisoned for sedition, is almost universal and that he is everywhere looked upon as a martyr.

A third difficulty springs from the present low standard of education. What is wanted in India, both from a political and religious point of view, is a sounder and higher education. It is not the high, but the low standard of education which is the danger. A higher education and more accurate habits of thought would soon render impossible the attempted revival of Hinduism, and compel educated men to face the questions raised by the contradictions of Hindu philosophy and the absurdities of Hindu mythology. At present an educated Hindu does not seriously consider what he believes and why he believes it. He is content with a vague adhesion to a conglomerate of contradictory beliefs; and one reason why he is content with it is because he is not trained to think deeply and probe questions to the bottom. His education trains him to move upon the surface of things; and so he does not feel the need of a thorough enquiry into first principles.

Writing in the report of the Mission in 1897, and speaking of the effect of missionary work at present among the educated classes, Mr. Whitehead wrote as follows :

"There may be, and probably is, a great deal going on beneath the surface which it is impossible for us to know ; but so far as outward appearances go it cannot be said that the general body of educated Hindus are any nearer to Christianity now than they appear to have been thirty or forty years ago. Individuals, no doubt, here and there, are being drawn to Christ, and there is certainly 'a remnant,' both in Calcutta and elsewhere, with regard to whom there is every reason for hopefulness. But there are scarcely any signs as yet that the educated classes, as a whole, are moving in the direction of Christianity. In many respects they seem to be moving away from it. Political causes have recently produced a more decided antagonism to the English Government, and this has naturally intensified the prejudice against Christianity as the religion of the English. And at the same time the influence of Western education has been so far decidedly in the direction of indifferentism. One marked characteristic of the University students of India, as a body, is their indifference to truth. All subjects are studied

simply with the object of scoring marks at examinations, and there is absolutely none of that movement of thought and eager desire for truth that has been characteristic of Western Universities from mediæval times. This is no doubt partly due to the fact that Western modes of thought are unfamiliar to the student, and a foreign language tends to cramp his mind. But whatever the causes, the result is disastrous to the moral earnestness of the students as a class. They come to look upon truth as a thing of no intrinsic importance, and to regard contradictory systems of philosophy or religion as equally useful to the examinee. Hence there is much curiosity in Calcutta, but little desire for what is true. And in such a society we must not look for speedy results. It may be that in God's providence it is necessary that this class should sink yet deeper into the slough of unbelief, and experience its bitter fruits in their moral and social life, before it is possible for them to turn to their God and Saviour. Meanwhile, we can only go on preaching to them the truth, and pray for their conversion, and feel thankful if we are allowed by any means to save some."

But apart from these more general influences which hinder at present the conversion of any large number of students, it has always to be remembered

that every student who becomes a Christian does so at an enormous personal sacrifice and often at the risk of very real persecution. It is perhaps scarcely realised what it means to a student when he asks to be baptised, or the lengths to which at times Hindu parents will go to prevent their sons accepting Christianity. The present writer has known a case of a parent giving his son money to be used for immoral purposes in order that his sins might prevent his baptism. Cases have been known in which parents have drugged their sons and practically made them idiots for the same purpose. It is not infrequent for a mother to threaten to take her own life if her child brings, as she considers, such disgrace upon the family as that of becoming a Christian. At the baptism of a married man which took place at the Mission just before the present writer arrived in Calcutta, his mother-in-law did actually poison herself on the morning of his baptism.

But short of these extreme acts, which, however, are far from uncommon, a lad who wishes to become a Christian knows that from the moment of his baptism, as a rule, his home will be for ever closed to him; none of his relations or friends will meet him or speak to him, or if they meet him will speak to him only to taunt him with the disgrace

which he has brought upon them and upon his country. If he has any property it will be taken from him; if he is married—and many of the students are married men—his wife and children will probably leave him. He will have to part with all that is familiar and known and dear to him, and to cast in his lot among men of another race and other modes of life and thought—perhaps among those who will rejoice over his conversion, but who will think little of showing him any warmth of brotherly love, or of giving him any real substitute for the traditions and affections of a lifetime which he has given up. If we try to think what this really means by translating it into the experience of our own life, and picturing ourselves face to face with the same consequences, we may perhaps understand what must be the moral and spiritual effort required of a Calcutta student—of one, not, like ourselves, trained to act independently and to take his own line, but accustomed from earliest infancy to think of himself only as one of a family and of a caste, and whose moral fibre, whose very sense of personality has been sapped and weakened by ages of inherited Pantheism. And yet from time to time, at the rate at present of about one or two a year, students do come forward to make a public profession of the Christian Faith.

To give a picture, which is but a sample of almost every case with which the Mission has had to deal, we will quote the account given by Mr. Strong of the baptism of a student in 1896:

"There is some good news to tell, for another of those events has happened which are to us as flashes of lightning on a dark night—sudden gleams which illuminate our way, and show us for a moment what this land will be like when the Light has fully risen upon it. A student who had come regularly to the hostel to read the Bible for nearly two years was convinced of the truth of Christianity; but, like so many more, had not hitherto been brave enough to profess before his relations his belief and his desire for baptism. He felt that if he did so his mother, of whom he was very fond, would perhaps die of grief, and would certainly be almost heart-broken. But a few weeks ago he had an illness, and in the course of it he made a solemn promise to God that he would be prepared definitely for baptism when he got well. For some time afterwards, however, he could not bear to face the consequences, and put it off. At last, one Sunday afternoon, when he was at the Mission House, he determined to hesitate no longer, but to stay here and write to his mother, to let her know why he had done so. He did this, and the next day

his eldest brother came in great distress to say that his mother was going mad. He stayed where he was, however, and soon afterwards his mother herself came with her sons. Then ensued a scene which we shall probably never forget. His mother clung to him, howling and moaning in the strange Indian way, for more than two hours, imploring him to go back with her and not break her heart. His eldest brother also did all he could to persuade him to go. Elderly Babus from neighbouring houses shouted to him not to be so foolish and so cruel. An excited crowd collected at the gate, awaiting the issue. And there he stood—a member of a race despised by most men for its weakness —allowing his mother to cling to him, knowing that he was probably breaking her heart, feeling that his fellow-countrymen all round would despise and hate him, assured that he was giving up all his worldly prospects, and yet able, through God's grace, to keep to his resolution! We all felt it to be a time of intense struggle, but it ended at last. His brother, seeing there was no hope of moving him, took his mother away. He was baptised the next day, and is now at Bishop's College. I have written so much about this one event because it illustrates so well the kind of things which have to happen before Babus can

become disciples of Christ. It shows, what it is not so easy to realise in England, what great miracles conversions are; and it may therefore, I think, help some of those who pray for us and our work to offer up more of those earnest intercessions in answer to which such miracles happen, and without which they do not."

But the work of the Oxford Mission is not to be gauged by the number of converts. These, as we have tried to show, will probably at present be very few; but that fact need not necessarily discourage us. There is a vast amount of work to be done which does not appear on the surface, but which is absolutely necessary as a foundation on which the future Church of India is to be built. All who know India agree in thinking that when the time is ripe the conversion of India will take place very rapidly, and there will be sudden and large accessions to the Church. Then it will be shown whether the Church in India has been preparing herself for it. It is agreed on all hands that great changes are taking place in that country. Much that a few years ago seemed so permanent and stable in the religious and social condition of the people is breaking up. Western education is destroying the old beliefs; railways and other results of Western civilisation are dealing hard blows

at the system of caste. Ten years ago Mr. Brown, speaking at a meeting of the Oxford Mission in London, said :

"We hear a great deal about the break-up of Hinduism under the light of modern education, and it is perfectly true that there is a very great movement just now, and that we are passing through a transition time. Many of the Hindus have adopted ideas and imported infidel books from Europe, and repeat glibly the phrases found in those books ; and yet I am sure that they are a race whose long tradition of centuries will never allow to become an irreligious race. There will come, in a generation or two, a time of settling down, a time which will be a settling down of India to some form or other of religion ; and I do feel it depends almost entirely upon the work which is being done now whether, when that settling down comes, they will become Christians or relapse into some form of Hinduism. When I suffer myself at all to look forward to the future with fear, the fear which most occurs to me is the danger that Hinduism, with that marvellous adaptability which it has shown to circumstances in times past, may again absorb all the elements of novelty and change which are now floating in the air, and so modify itself that people shall be able to accept it, at any rate as a social

system, even in spite of the new ideas which have been flooding in upon them. And though that is what in times of despondency I fear, it is also a constant source of exhilaration and defence against permanent despondency, because it makes one feel that the work which one is doing now is foundation work, that it must tell, if it is faithfully done, upon the future, and that whatever is done now, however little its results may appear upon the surface, is needful, if the future is ever to show us the Christian Church in India."

These words are as true to-day as they were ten years ago. That great and silent revolution in thought, in faith, in custom, which is going on so steadily in India will one day make itself articulate; one after another the peoples of India will have exhausted all those substitutes for God wherewith men in their ignorance seek to satisfy the needs of the human soul, and at last they will cry for Him who alone can give them peace. It is madness to say we will wait till the time comes, and then make the effort to meet its demands. When the crisis is upon us it will then be too late. Now is the time to act; now is the time to prepare and equip our spiritual forces; now is the time to pour in our money, not in shillings and pence, but in amounts proportionate to the needs, and to send

out men, not in ones and twos, but in hundreds; so that when the day arrives there may be the Church, ready to minister to the spiritual hunger of the vast multitudes which will look towards her; ready with the full teaching of the Christian Faith which alone can satisfy the human intellect; with all the wealth of sacramental grace which alone can supply true moral force; with her ancient discipline, her chastened yet splendid worship, her complete organisation in the threefold ministry. Thus and thus only shall we be able to pay our debt to India; thus and thus only shall we be able to welcome into the Heavenly City the peoples of that great land as they at last seek to bring their glory into it, and to become fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God.

CHAPTER X.

HINDUISM AS IT IS.[1]

"Dark is the world to thee; thyself art the reason why,
For is He not all but thou, that hast power to feel 'I am I'?
Glory about thee, without thee: and thou fulfillest thy doom,
Making Him broken gleams, and a stifled splendour and gloom."

ANY history of the Oxford Mission to Calcutta would be incomplete without some account, however inadequate, of the present state of Hindu religious thought as it is met with among the educated classes. The present writer cannot do more than put together very briefly an outline of some aspects of modern Hinduism as they presented themselves to him while he was in Calcutta. But he does so in the hope that it may help the readers of this history to realise the difficulty of the work among the educated Hindus, and so allay that impatience with which the progress of Indian missions is so often judged, as well as to dissipate the illusions of those who

[1] In the following chapter free use has been made of articles which have been published in the *Epiphany* and in the Oxford Mission *Quarterly Papers*.

may have accepted the somewhat common idea that Hinduism is a religion which, though inferior to Christianity, possesses a fairly practical moral power. For a really luminous and masterly account of modern Hinduism the writer wishes to refer to the first and second series of Sir Alfred Lyall's *Asiatic Studies*, and more especially to the admirable discussion of the subject in the first chapter of the second series.

I. The Extreme Vagueness of Hinduism.

The first point on which we wish to dwell is the extreme vagueness of Hinduism. Whatever differences there may be on many questions among Christians, they can all accept the Apostles' Creed as the formula of their faith. In that concise and nervous statement is found the outline of the Christian belief. But no such formulary of belief exists among Hindus ; at least, repeated challenges to Hindu gentlemen to produce any such formula have always failed to elicit any reply. But a statement as to what Hinduism is was evoked from a leading native paper in Calcutta in the early part of 1894. It was published under the following circumstances. In April of that year the *Banga Bashi*, a native newspaper, in giving the account of the suicide of a child-widow aged

eleven, concluded with the words, "*It is her fate.*" The *Epiphany*, in commenting on these words, asked to be enlightened as to the meaning attached to the word "fate" by orthodox Hindus. It was in answer to this question that the paragraph which follows was published in the *Indian Nation*. This is the ablest and best conducted of the native papers in Calcutta, and its editor is a gentleman who has been in England and has had the advantages of both an Eastern and Western education. He is himself a Hindu, and therefore speaks from within Hindu society and religious thought. This is his account of Hinduism as it now is :

"We shall not undertake to answer the last question in any direct or definite form.[1] But from all the expositions of Hinduism that we have recently been reading we should be justified in saying that Hinduism does not believe in a Father, does not believe in a personal God at all, does not believe in any God who is not the substance of a universe coeval with Himself, does not therefore believe in responsibility to a supreme Being, does not believe in any conscious award of reward and punishment. All that happens to a man in this

[1] *I.e.* the meaning attached by orthodox Hindus to the word "fate."

world is only the consequence necessarily arising from his actions in a previous life in this world; his actions in this present life will determine his lot in his next birth, and so on, until by sinlessness he becomes absorbed in the divine essence and so saved from future births. What sin or sinlessness can mean in such a system we shall not take upon ourselves to answer. Man's life is a chain of necessities; divine operations are necessities also. God does not will to create; the universe, always existent in Him, is unfolded by a necessity. Not being a person, He lays down no moral law which it would be a sin to disobey. Obedience and disobedience have, in fact, no meaning, as man is not a free agent. That seems to be the interpretation of Hinduism now prevalent in Bengal. How far it is correct we shall not seek to discuss. Those who offer the interpretation are so confident in its correctness that they would treat as idiots all who differed from them. A correspondent who often addresses us on Hinduism in an authoritative way informed us the other day that creation, a personal God and free will were indefensible doctrines and impossible conceptions."[1]

Surely the words we have just quoted throw a significant light on the condition of modern

[1] The *Indian Nation*, April 30th, 1894.

Hinduism, and the more significant in that, as we have said, it comes from one not without, but within, the Hindu religion. We say "religion," but the word is a misnomer, for what place can there be for religion, in any real sense of the word, if the God towards whom man's religion is directed is not a personal Being?

This utterance of the *Indian Nation* was succeeded in the following May by an article in the same journal entitled "Protean Hinduism," in which the writer shows how various are the forms in which Hinduism is held by different teachers. And herein lies one of the chief difficulties which a missionary experiences in dealing with it. What is it he has to attack? Where is he to begin? How is he to deal with a religion which one of its own supporters thus describes as being mostly a series of negations?

But this is not all. Hinduism, as it meets us to-day among the educated classes in Calcutta, not only baffles attack from its extreme vagueness, and the rapidity and ease with which it is ever adapting itself to new forms, and discovering new authorities in its sacred books to sanction the ever increasing demands of Western civilisation and Western education, but it has an added difficulty in its apparent capacity for holding what

to a Western mind appear to be bewildering contradictions.

A few weeks after the issue of the extract from the *Indian Nation* to which we have just referred, the editor of the same paper had occasion to criticise a speech made by the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal at a missionary meeting at Darjeeling, in which criticism were the following words:

"Hinduism is more an affair of life than of doctrine. The Hindu will not ordinarily be convinced of the superiority of a religion which permits the slaughter of kine for food and of men for conquest. He believes in a religion which inculcates physical purity and asceticism, which makes a sin of killing, and which permits of no flagging of spiritual interests. A religion which extends its sanction to war, butchery, and diplomacy will not appear to him spiritual enough; and games, sports, dancing, and such other Western accomplishments will strike him as unpardonable levity in a minister of religion. His admiration is reserved for the *Yogi*; and he has no appreciation of the clergyman who wins a bride by courtship and dines and drives in state. He is an hourly witness of miracles, and will not limit his faith to those few recorded in one sacred book. He believes in the capacity of prayer to bring down the divine influence to human

souls and even to clay images. Religion is to him, if it is to anybody, *other*-worldliness—absolute, absorbing, all-comprehending—and not a mere regulation of *this*-worldliness. Let the missionary therefore well understand his customer before he sets about his business. If he is prepared with a more spiritual and less worldly ideal than the Hindu, he may do something. But he certainly will not do anything if, instead of forgetting distinctions of colour, he emphasises them and gives to the 'heathen,' newly admitted into light, another caste in place of the one he was made to renounce."[1]

We think that any one who reads this and the former extract together will not think we have been unjust in speaking of the capacity of the Hindu mind for holding statements which are mutually contradictory. And to substantiate our charge still further we will quote a criticism made in the *Epiphany* on these same two passages:

"If inability to grasp the primary law of thought, that a thing cannot at the same time be and not be, exhibits a convincing proof of 'spirituality,' then certainly the ideal Hindu, as depicted by the *Indian Nation*, may lay claim to the possession of that quality in a very high degree. According to our contemporary, the primary article of the Hindu's

[1] The *Indian Nation*, June 11th, 1894.

'creed' (if we may be allowed the expression) is that 'God, not being a person, lays down no moral law which it would be a sin to disobey,' and he proceeds to act upon this belief by 'making a sin of killing even kine for food or of men for conquest'; while his chief ceremonial expression of it is prayer, which 'brings down the divine influence to human souls and even to clay images!' If the 'spiritual' is really equivalent to the irrational, we must wish Godspeed to materialism.

"Other contradictions are involved, which are not expressed. The true Hindu, we are told, believes in the sinfulness of 'war, butchery, and diplomacy'; and a religion which extends its sanction to these is intolerable to him. But the most sacred hymns of his religion consist largely of prayers for victory over enemies in battle, while its epics deal, like all epics, with war and bloodshed, in which the gods themselves take part. Nay, more, he believes the warrior caste to have had a divine origin second only to the priestly. As to diplomacy, we can only wish that we met more Hindus who disapproved of it.

"Again, we are told that 'games, sports, dancing, and such other Western accomplishments strike him as unpardonable levity in a minister of religion.' In this we may agree with him; but it seems

slightly odd, to say the least of it, that the most popular of all the deities should be celebrated for precisely such accomplishments as well as others less innocent; and we can only wish the Brahman caste—the chief 'ministers of religion'—indulged in no worse diversions.

"Again, if 'spirituality' and 'other-worldliness' are chiefly betokened by the asceticism which delights in finding impurities in the use of material things, and in legislating for these with greater emphasis and elaboration than for grave moral trespasses, we may concede that the Hindu outshines all others in the possession of these virtues—even the Pharisees, whose bondage to physical and ceremonial ideas of impurity brought them into such violent collision with the teaching of Christ. 'Other-worldliness' we should take to mean such an absorption in spiritual things as lifts a man's mind above these trivial distinctions, rather than the spirit which exhibits itself in their multiplication—'touch not, taste not, handle not'—a legalism which could not be better described than as 'a system of regulated this-worldliness,' and an aggravated type of it. The teachings of Christ and of St. Paul are certainly most 'worldly' and 'unspiritual' from this point of view."

In July of the same year the editor of the

Epiphany was again in controversy with the *Indian Nation* on the question of the contradictoriness of its statements as to the belief of Pantheists in a personal God. The *Indian Nation*, in an indignant article, accused the *Epiphany* of misrepresenting its meaning, and it was in vindication of his assertion that the editor printed the following extracts from the *Indian Nation* in parallel columns:

"Pantheism is objected to by our contemporary for the reason that Pantheists eliminate from the conception of what they call the 'divine' the idea of personality. We are afraid the *Epiphany* has again missed the mark of distinction between Theism and Pantheism. Pantheism, as far as we understand it, by no means eliminates or discards the idea of a personal God, but the idea of a *separate* personal God. To the Pantheist God is personified by the universe at large. The Theist may think otherwise: to him God may be a personality distinct from the universe; but whether distinct from or personified by the universe, there is the conception of a divine personality in both systems."—*Indian Nation*, November 13th, 1893.

"He must have heard of the Pantheists. Do they believe in a personal God? And yet have they not felt it permissible to speak of a moral God and a divine influence?"—*Indian Nation*, July 2nd, 1894.

"Our contemporary asserts that some time last year we maintained vigorously the position that Pantheists do believe in a personal God. It is the simple truth that we never maintained any such position, either last year or at any other period of our existence, vigorously or otherwise. . . . *We* never declared that Pantheists do believe in a personal God. . . . The *Epiphany*, of all papers, should have been the last to fight a battle with weapons no better than limping logic and perversions of fact."—*Indian Nation*, July 9, 1894.

It would be difficult, one would have thought, even for the 'ideal Hindu,' to blink the contradictions here exhibited; but all that it evoked from the *Indian Nation* was an angry and scornful article on the gross dulness of the Western intellect.

II. HINDUISM A SOCIAL SYSTEM.

Let us turn now to another exponent of modern Hinduism, Mr. Guru Prasad Sen. According to Mr. G. P. Sen, Hinduism is not a religion, but a social system. We are bound to confess that to one living in Calcutta the social side of Hinduism is much more prominent than the religious side. It is not, for example, the breach of the moral law, but the transgression of caste rules, which really touches what, for want of another word, we must call the conscience of a Hindu. To tell a lie is nothing; to eat with a foreigner, or with a Hindu of a lower caste, is a heavy sin, for which a definite and elaborate purification must be undergone. Again, while the mass of students would not, openly at any rate, contravene the laws of their caste, prayer is practically unknown among them. But let us listen to Mr. Guru Prasad Sen as he explains Hinduism to us in "An Introduction to the Study of Hinduism" which appeared as an article in the *Calcutta Review*:

"Hinduism is not, and never has been, a religious organisation. It is a purely social system, which insists for those who are Hindus on the observance of certain social forms, and not on the profession of any particular religious beliefs. It has not even a religious creed or a common set of beliefs, nor has it for its guide a particular book, though popularly the Vedas and Shastras are credited with being the books of the Hindus. So far as religious beliefs are concerned, Hinduism embraces within its fold all phases of belief and even of unbelief, from the extreme agnosticism of the Nastics and Charbaks to the popular polytheistic creed of the believers in the myriads of Hindu gods and goddesses. The Hindu Shastras are, to use a Hindu metaphor, a vast ocean, which, so far as religion is concerned, the votary, like the Hindu gods of old, has only to churn to find the nectar of truth which is exactly suited to the light that is in him. It is perfectly optional with a Hindu to choose from any one of the different religious creeds with which the Shastras abound; he may choose to have a faith and creed, if he wants a creed, or to do without one. He may be an atheist, a deist, a monotheist, or a polytheist, a believer in the Vedas or Shastras, or a sceptic as regards their authority; and his position as a Hindu cannot be questioned

by anybody because of his beliefs or unbeliefs so long as he conforms to social rules."

III. Hinduism and Sin.

Once again let us question Hinduism as to its teaching on the all-important and universal fact of sin. In answer we will quote from a speech made at the Chicago Parliament of Religions by Babu N. N. Dutt, known as the Swami Vivekananda, who was the representative of the Hindu religion at that extraordinary assemblage. In the course of his speech he made use of the following words:

"Allow me to call you, brethren, by that sweet name *heirs of immortal bliss*: yea, the Hindus refuse to call you sinners. Ye are the children of God, the sharers of immortal bliss. Ye, divinities on earth, sinners? It is a sin to call man so. It is a standing libel on human nature. Come up, O lions, and shake off the delusion that you are sheep: you are souls immortal, spirits free and blest and eternal. Ye are not matter, ye are not bodies. Matter is your servant, not you the servants of matter."

"According to Hindu philosophy, sin is a complete delusion: there is really no such thing at all, thus justifying Babu N. N. Dutt's statement. Individual existence being an illusion—a sort of

mysterious disease that has crept over the one universal existence—it follows that the offences and faults for which the illusory individual conscience blames itself are equally unreal. The supreme essence is of course in itself sinless, only somehow it dreams itself into individuality and sinfulness. The real object of life in Hinduism is not a moral one at all, but a purely intellectual one—*i.e.* not to get rid of sin, but to rid ourselves of the idea that we are sinners.

"And yet, this being its philosophy, what do we behold in practice? There are few beliefs so vitally held as that of *Karma*, which teaches that sins bring terrible punishments—that as men sow, so must they reap, in this life and in future lives. The laws of Manu and Vishnu contain elaborately detailed lists of the fearful penalties attaching in the next world to the chief sins against Hindu morality, along with equally elaborate prescriptions of the various expiations, penances, tortures, self-macerations—sometimes approaching suicide—by which alone these sins can be atoned for in the present life. The Hindu apparently acts upon the belief of the reality of sin, accepts the verdict of his conscience, while yet he holds both sin and conscience to be of the nature of illusion. How the theory and practice are reconcilable is

more than any Hindu has ever yet succeeded in explaining, the only explanation being that 'Hinduism' is a mass of incoherent, inconsistent, hopelessly irreconcilable beliefs, jumbled together under a common name—Theism, Pantheism, Polytheism, Atheism, all alike sheltering themselves under it." [1]

The members of the Brahmo Somaj have indeed a more definite and clear conception of sin than the orthodox Hindu, but they themselves acknowledge that they have derived their sense of sin from Christian teaching. They certainly could not have got it from Hinduism, for according to Hinduism, as expounded at least by Babu N. N. Dutt, the soul is already perfectly blest, but it fails to recognise that it is so.

Let us listen again to another Hindu, Babu Gurudip Sing. In a letter written by him in the *Epiphany* of July 5th, 1895, on the "Ideals of Hinduism," he makes the following statements with regard to the Hindu view of sin—statements which he quotes with approval as expressing the mind of an orthodox Hindu:

"Shankaracharya [2] plainly says that the ideas,

[1] *Epiphany*, May 31st, 1895.

[2] A great religious teacher and reviver of Brahmanism. He lived about the end of the seventh or the beginning of the eighth century.

namely (1) that I am a sinful man, (2) that there must be some supreme Being having power to free me from my sins and to give me eternal heavenly life, etc., etc., are emanations of an imperfect mind. He who has obtained the light of true knowledge will never entertain such ideas. . . . From what you (*i.e.* the *Epiphany*) write, it seems that you think it impossible to get rid of sin by the knowledge of Brahma.[1] No: we do get rid of sin by its knowledge. You know that ideas create ideas, and at the same time they destroy each other. For example, the idea of some serious illness results in the idea of death, which again in its turn gives rise to the idea of sorrow, and so on. But the idea of some successful remedy or medicine at the same time counteracts the idea of serious illness, and thus the man who should have otherwise experienced sorrow now enjoys peace of mind. In the same way, the idea of Brahma destroys the idea of sin altogether. The Hindu idea of sinfulness is just the same as the Christian idea (!); *and we want to get rid of the idea of not sin only, but virtue also*, because you know they are co-relatives, and the retention of either of them is equally fatal to the uniform and undisturbed peace of mind. . . ."

The italics in the above paragraph are our own.

[1] The supreme Being

The sentence illustrates a very prevalent idea in Hindu thought—namely that vice and virtue are both equally illusions, and that the aim of the perfect Hindu is to rise superior to both, to reach a state in which he becomes alike indifferent to virtue as well as to vice. To show that we are not misrepresenting Hinduism on this point, we will quote the answer given to the following question, to which the *Epiphany* asked for a reply from an orthodox Hindu. The question was as follows:

"Is it the ideal of Hinduism to realise sinfulness and obey the voice of conscience, or to get rid of both?"

To this the following reply was received:

"The Hindu considers it his duty to realise sinfulness and to obey the voice of conscience *so long as he has not practically realised that he is the absolute*, or in other words, as long as he has not mingled his consciousness with the spirit of nature. The *Yogi*[1] has no attraction or repulsion either for heaven or hell. The state of the *Yogi* is above that in which there is longing for any object. *The wise never praises the good, nor does he hate the bad. Equal in happiness and misery, he thinks himself above duty.*"

The italics are again our own; and the whole

[1] A Hindu ascetic.

answer illustrates what has to be constantly borne in mind in studying Hinduism, that the great object of life is an intellectual, not a moral one: virtue and vice and conscience are all "illusion," and the contemplation of the indifference of good and evil is one of the means by which that object is to be reached. The description of "the wise man" as given in the above answer certainly affords ground for the charge that the object of Hinduism is to get rid of conscience.

IV.—Hindu Asceticism.

The ascetic life is held in great veneration among all Hindus, and appeals most strongly to them—a fact which it is very important for missionaries working in India to bear in mind. Grotesque and repulsive as are many of the forms which it takes, no one, we think, can fail to be impressed by the strength of will by which a Hindu ascetic carries out his self-inflicted torture or penance through long periods of years. There have, without question, been wonderful examples of self-denial and renunciation in India, from that of the Buddha downwards; and great emphasis has often been laid on this aspect of Hinduism, Western writers as well as Hindus contrasting it favourably with the apparent absence of any similar effort

in modern Christianity. But any real comparison fails from the fact that Christian and Hindu asceticism are based on totally different conceptions. To the Christian, asceticism is the training and disciplining of the *whole* man, body, soul, and spirit, to reach his highest development, his greatest moral and spiritual capacity. To the Hindu, asceticism is the effort by which he endeavours to annihilate the body, which he considers inherently evil, and by every means in his power to sink back into that unconscious state of absorption into the supreme essence from which he believes that he has somehow unfortunately emerged. The Christian ascetic again aims at a life of self-discipline as a means of gaining greater freedom for the service of mankind ; the Hindu, on the other hand, with some few exceptions, looks on his fellow-men only as a hindrance to his own spiritual advancement, and seeks as far as possible to free himself from any connection with them.

Once again, Christian asceticism has a profoundly moral aim, the subjugation (not annihilation) of the flesh to the obedience of the spirit—of the lower and lawless impulses of our nature to the rule of the divinely inspired and directed will. In other words, it aims at enabling man to live before God in the filial relation of loving and

true sonship. But to the Hindu moral conceptions are only part of that illusion from which he is ever seeking to escape ; while any idea of a living relation to a personal God is impossible, inasmuch as the whole effort of the Hindu is to lose his consciousness by re-absorption into the supreme Being.

It is these fundamental differences in the idea of the end of the ascetic life which must always be borne in mind in instituting any comparison between the asceticism of Hinduism and that of Christianity. We would like to quote in connection with this point the following extract from the *Epiphany*, in which the subject of Hindu asceticism is treated :

" The strong wave of pessimism which appears to be submerging German philosophic thought is, we gather, responsible for the sympathy with Oriental systems which is now so prevalent. Between the gloomy mind of Schopenhauer and the Indian philosophies of despair there is evidently much affinity. Existence, in the view of both, is an unmixed evil : it were better for man if he had not been born ; but as he has suffered that worst of misfortunes, the only thing that remains is to try to creep back somehow into the unconsciousness from which he emerged. If humanity could

commit a corporate act of suicide, so much the better: anyhow, the better part for each man consists in resolutely setting to work to kill out his consciousness, as the source of all evil. The ideal sage is the self-macerating fakir, who, by a ferocious exercise of the will, succeeds in torturing his unhappy brain out of the so-called delusion of individuality.

"The state sought to be reached by these visionaries, that of trance or coma, is pretty much that which comes naturally in a fainting-fit, or from some undue physical depression. The late John Addington Symonds, whose biography has recently been published, describes himself as in his youth subject to these strange lapses into the sense of nothingness—a kind of mental, without the physical, swoon. It seems to have been connected in his case with an exceedingly infirm and consumptive constitution. If a physician were to diagnose the physical symptoms of a fakir who had brought himself to the state of belief in his oneness with Brahma, he would no doubt find that he had reduced his brain to a similarly morbid condition. It is not really a high ideal to force the body, and the mind with it, into the abnormal state which both sometimes reach naturally by disease: indeed, it is only a species of prolonged

suicide ; and suicide, however painful, is always an act of cowardice. The self-slayer, whether the agony he inflicts upon himself be brief or prolonged, is equally a deserter from the ranks. The short cut or the roundabout way are equally illegitimate exits from life, and neither, in spite of the fortitude exhibited, is really admirable. Which, we would ask, exhibits the higher ideal—the life of the *Yogi* wasted in solitary self-torture till unconsciousness is achieved, or that of Jesus of Nazareth, who went about doing good, and whose continuous sacrifice was for others, not for Himself?

"Pessimism is always paralysing, both in the East and the West. In India it has been largely responsible for the present degradation of the people by the hopeless passivity which it engenders. A world and a life which are mere *maya*[1] are obviously not worth reforming ; both may have to be endured for a time, but that is all ; and in the long run nothing, neither virtue nor vice, makes very much difference. It is by the retention of this narcotic *maya*-creed as an integral feature of its system that the Bhagavat-Gita[2] (perhaps the highest product

[1] Illusion.

[2] An eclectic system of Indian philosophy. Its author, who is unknown, is supposed to have lived in India about the second or third century A.D.

of Hindu thought) succeeds so fatally in undermining its own ethical structure, and neutralises its most exalted moral injunctions. Those who are seeking to regenerate India by a reversion to that which is responsible for her degeneration are only seeking to rebuild a fallen house upon the same sand. National and personal reformation must proceed from a moral impulse; and that impulse no dreary illusion-philosophy is capable of giving.

"We should be the very last to deny the value of asceticism or of the contemplative life. Austerity, self-subjugation, an intense conviction of the deceptiveness and transitoriness of the merely material life, a piercing realisation of the spiritual universe and of the divine, indwelling Presence,—all these are the true marks of sanctity, qualifying men and women to be the religious benefactors of suffering humanity, whether by fervent intercession or by direct outward activity. But a course of continuous meditation on the absolute identity and nonentity of everything and everybody, as enjoined by the teaching of Hinduism, is the very worst possible training for such a divine work. The more convinced a man is of the non-existence of the world the less likely he is to be a benefactor to it.

V. Idolatry in India.[1]

"To Christian eyes the most conspicuous part of modern Hinduism is its idolatry; and to Christian sentiment no other sin can be more abhorrent and revolting. Wherever Christianity comes into contact with idolatry, she instinctively recognises in it the first enemy to be overcome. In India she finds herself face to face with idolatry in its grossest forms; and amongst educated people it would seem that she has almost overcome it. There are very few now of those who have come well within the reach of Christian culture who would openly avow themselves idolaters. Idolatry is to all such, not perhaps sinful always, but at all events exceedingly irrational.

"With such a result, so far as it goes, Christians cannot but be well pleased. Even granting that those who have given up their idolatry are still very far distant from the purity of the Christian Faith, it is still something that God is not dishonoured before their eyes, as in former times, by being likened to things which are the work of men's hands. But how long will this better state of things last?—that is a question which may well trouble the thoughtful. One listens to some young

[1] From article published in *Oxford Mission Quarterly Paper* for July, 1898.

student's contemptuous reflections on the absurdity of idol worship, and one is inclined to think that for him at least, and for all who may have the advantage of a similar education, idolatry, even though they should consciously seek to recover the sentiment that inspired it, is an impossibility, and that as education becomes more general it must finally disappear from the country. This would be a mistake; for idolatry is not merely an error of intellect, it is a sin. It is not due, primarily, to any falseness of logic, but to a perversion of the will. It is a result primarily of a moral defect, and not an intellectual. It is, of course, an intellectual absurdity as well; but the darkened intellect which can be guilty of such an absurdity is itself the result of sin, and therefore no mere intellectual culture will ever secure men permanently against idolatry. And so the question remains, is India being permanently rescued from idolatry or not? For our part, we certainly do not believe that the mere education of the schools will ever achieve such a result. For is it not a fact of history, and a very striking fact, that amongst non-Christian nations the most philosophical have ever been the most idolatrous? The wisdom of the Egyptians in ancient times has become almost proverbial; their idolatry is no less famous nor

remarkable. In spite of twenty centuries of study the world has not yet outgrown the philosophy of the Greeks, yet it is recorded of the most cultured city in all Greece that when St. Paul visited it 'his spirit was stirred in him when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry.' And to come nearer home, was ever people prouder of its philosophy than the Hindus? and has any country better cause to be ashamed of its idolatry?

"These are but instances, we believe, of an almost universal rule. It is not in the simplicity of a primitive age that we find religion most degraded; it is when nations have deteriorated morally from the primitive standard, when the darkened intellect has given itself up to vain speculations that the idea of God becomes gradually perverted, and superstition takes the place of the simple reverence of earlier days.

"It is not, we repeat, the result of mere ignorance —not, that is, of a natural, innocent, childlike ignorance—it is the result, first of all, of a perverted will which refuses to recognise God, and then of elaborate philosophies in which the natural idea of God is left out.

"How well might this be illustrated by the history of Hinduism in the past! But our concern at present is rather with the prospects of India in the

future; and we ask ourselves anxiously whether the gradual disavowal of idolatry on the part of the educated at the present day is likely to take effect permanently? Undoubtedly, in spite of all the intellectual contempt which is now heaped on idolatry, there is cause for much misgiving on this point. For, to begin with, there are many who repudiate idolatry in word, and who yet think it no shame whatever to bow down before some monstrosity in wood or stone, and who will defend themselves by saying they do not worship the idol; only they see in it a visible manifestation of some attribute of God. So they bow before the four-handed *Kali*, that they may be enabled to realise the power of God, as they will tell you, and before *Durga*, in recognition of her kindness and benevolence. Here, then, is a large class of people who, in spite of their disavowal, are yet idolaters pure and simple. Then a large proportion, perhaps a majority of those who discard idolatry themselves, nevertheless approve of it for the common people. Such people at least have not acquired that abhorrence of idolatry as a *sin* which Christians feel. To them it is obviously nothing worse than an absurdity. But the absurdity of one age, as one knows, is only too liable to become the plausible philosophy of its successor. Idolatry was furnished with a justifica-

tion in old systems of philosophy, and may be again in future schemes. The class of people we are considering afford no guarantee that their descendants, even, it may be, their logical descendants, will not be idolaters like their fathers.

"And so the question becomes important: on what grounds do the educated men of to-day (we are not now speaking of converts to Christianity) give up idolatry? The answer to that question will show whether much real progress in true religion is being made, or whether the apparent progress is delusive. Much, for instance, of this modern contempt for idolatry is no doubt due to mere scepticism, to a disbelief in the supernatural altogether. So far as this is the case, we can only look for a deeper degradation than before. For scepticism, in which the true idea of God is lost, is always succeeded eventually by a grosser superstition. Witness, for instance, the spiritualism of our own age. Materialistic philosophy has not succeeded in banishing the belief in the supernatural; it has only tended to substitute in the minds of those who follow it a ridiculous spiritualism for the supernatural element in true religion. Theosophy is the true counterpart of the sceptical materialism of our century. Our age, too, has to some extent fallen into idolatry, and its idols are *Mahatmas* and the like.

"We do not believe, however, that in India mere scepticism has been the most potent influence in discrediting idolatry. Rather we believe that this result has been mainly due to a conscientious effort to recover the truth. We recognise such an effort, for instance, in Brahmoism, which, next to Christianity, represents the most considerable religious movement in India during this century. We may ask, then, is Brahmoism, or Theism in any of its various manifestations, likely to be a permanent force working towards the final abolition of idolatry in India? And we reply that unless Theism advances much beyond its present point there is no hope of such a result. The Theists of India have won their way back by honest effort, at the cost of considerable pain and some persecution, to the standpoint of natural religion. They have learnt once more the great truth of the Unity of God, and have risen to a high conception of His spirituality. But they cannot maintain themselves at this point without advancing or receding. To rest in the simplicity of a primitive piety—though until Christianity appeared, this was the highest aim possible for man—is now impracticable; partly, as we may conclude, because no nation ever yet has been able to maintain itself at this point, even the Jews, whose 'genius' for religion is

recognised by all, lapsing again and again into idolatry; partly because of the atmosphere of speculation in which men live; but chiefly because the higher truth of Christianity is now kept constantly before their eyes, and in the light of revelation mere natural religion cannot exist in its purity. Theism must either accept revelation or it must pay the penalty of shutting its eyes to the truth, and lapse from its own standard of truth. This is at present the position of Indian Theism. And, indeed, with all its profession of going back to the religious purity of the Vedas, Indian Theism does not really attempt the impossible work of resting on a primitive type of piety. Surrounded by rival philosophies and religions as it is, it too must have its theology. Its rejection of idolatry must be based on a principle of that theology, and that principle will work itself out, however slowly, to its logical issue.

"Let us try to see what this issue is likely to be. On what principle does Indian Theism reject idolatry? We should like to have that question answered for us by some Theist, for we are not ourselves quite sure of the right answer. One answer we have heard more than once, however, and we suppose it represents fairly accurately the Theistic view of idolatry. It is said that God

being a Spirit has no form. He is infinite, and transcends all such limits as 'form' implies. To imagine Him under any form is to deny His infinity. Hence, though (as we constantly hear it said) ordinary uneducated people cannot help conceiving of Him under some particular shape, a higher and purer theology, which can look reality in the face, will discard the image and worship Him simply as He is.

"Now this, though it may be perfectly good logic, is just one of those vain speculations which St. Paul speaks of as the precursors of idolatry. For if the argument be pressed, and unless it be supplemented by what appears to be a contradictory line of argument, it leads not to any truer conception of God, but either back to Pantheism, from which the Indian Theist is trying to escape, or else to Atheism; and it is from Pantheism that all the polytheism and idolatry of Hinduism start. For we must remember that it is just as much an infringement of God's infinity (from a merely logical point of view) to suppose that He is a person, as to conceive of Him under any particular form; and even character, and the attributes which are component parts of character, all imply limitation. The logical approach of Pantheism has for its starting-point this ideal

of the infinity of God unchecked by any other consideration. The way lies through a negation of all those qualities which seem to be inconsistent with His infinity, and finally of His personality, until at last a Being is reached, impersonal, characterless, of whom nothing whatever can be predicated, not even (Indian philosophy, in its logical consistency, has not stopped short of this stultifying conclusion) existence itself! Such a being is Brahma. But being infinite, this being is, *ex-hypothesi*, everywhere. He is everything and at the same time nothing, and all we see in the world is simply the manifestation of this nothingness, which is God. Each thing in nature is as really God as the nothingness which lies behind. Why should it not be worshipped as God, seeing that God does not exist except as manifested in it?

"Such, we conceive, is the logical basis of Indian idolatry. It is Theism, which has taken a Pantheistic direction, logically developed. And this is the great danger of the Indian Theism of to-day. It always tends to Pantheism, and thus to drift into the old line of vain speculation which has resulted in the vast system of idolatry which is now the disgrace of India.

"These considerations lead us to the conclusion that if idolatry is to be banished, the work will

not be done by the intellectual Theism of the Indian Unitarian. Intellectual Theism must be corrected by facts, such facts as Revelation alone can supply. Just as science, if it trusts to *à priori* reasoning, and does not constantly correct its conclusions by the facts of nature, loses itself in the vain dreams of magic, so religion, when once it begins to reason at all, unless it constantly checks its reasonings by reference to the facts of Revelation, inevitably loses itself in degrading superstition. And such facts Christianity supplies. It tells us that man, being created in the image and likeness of God, is himself the best revelation of God; and that God was revealed in all the perfection of His nature, so far as man is able to know Him, in the person of the one man Jesus Christ. The character and Person of Jesus Christ is the one fact by which all our religious speculations as to the nature of God must be checked. By a study of His Person we shall be able to see, though not to understand, the great mystery of the divine Personality without losing our sense of the divine Infinity; and summed up in Him as its divine prototype, we shall learn to see the whole universe of things before which, in this their eternal presentment, it is no idolatry to bow down."

We have tried to give our readers some idea of "Hinduism as it is" among educated Hindus. The picture, we think, cannot be called either a bright or a hopeful one; and in spite of the present effort in Calcutta towards a revival of Hinduism, the more thoughtful men in educated Hindu society acknowledge the hopelessness of the situation. Pantheism has had a fair field in India and a long possession, and this is its result—a religion which, when it ceases to be a series of negations, becomes utterly fluid and vague; which counts the possession of any or of no creed a matter of indifference so long as there is conformity to social rules; which shuts its eyes to the great fact of sin and repudiates with scorn the name of "sinner"; which denies moral responsibility, in that it teaches that man does not stand in any relation to a personal and moral Being, but is controlled by fate; which has no desire whatever for making converts, but only craves to receive the appreciation of the rest of mankind, who must of necessity (for none can be Hindus who are not born such) remain for ever outside its sacred limits.

This, and not the "ideal" which is to be found in the pages of some Western writers, is the real Hinduism of educated India; and it does not require a very long experience of the condition

of Hindu society to recognise—what the more honest and thoughtful among the educated Hindus are themselves ready to confess—the absolute inability of Hinduism to work out either the social, moral, or religious regeneration of the country.

APPENDIX A.

THE BRAHMO SOMAJ.

A SHORT account of the sect known as the Brahmo Somaj may be interesting to some of our readers. This sect of Indian Theists was originated by that very remarkable man the Rajah Ram Mohun Roy, a Bengali Brahman, who was born in 1774, and worked his way, partly by help of the Baptist missionaries at Serampore, out of idolatry and polytheism into an Unitarian Theistic belief. The word Brahmo is an adjective formed from Brahman, or God, and is equivalent to "Theistic." Somaj means "society" or "community." In order to discover the truth, he acquainted himself with the religious books of various faiths, and is said even to have acquired Greek and Hebrew. He also devoted himself to social reforms, and his denunciations of the practice of suttee had considerable weight with the British Government. But he never desired to dissociate himself from Hinduism; and he retained his "sacred thread"—the mark of a Brahman—to the last. In 1830 he visited England—the first to break the Hindu rule that prohibits crossing the sea—but succumbed to the climate in 1833 at Bristol, where he is buried.

The Theistic community, after his death, found a leader in Devendra Nath Tagore, a disciple of Ram Mohun Roy, who organised the society still further. This gentleman, born in 1818, is still living, and is venerated as a patriarch by all sections of the Somaj. It was he who

first introduced the declaration of Theistic faith and renunciation of idolatry which is required of one joining the community.

The society continued to increase slowly, and in 1847 the important step was taken of giving up the Hindu Vedas, which hitherto had been regarded as inspired and infallible. The Somaj thus ranked itself as a rationalistic sect. The doctrine of transmigration was also abandoned.

In 1858 the Somaj took a new lease of life under the distinguished reformer, Keshub Chandra Sen. This gentleman, who had received an English education at the Presidency College, brought a new element into the society, and ardently devoted himself to the work of liberalising and modernising it. Much of the old Hindu atmosphere and customs were swept away. But his zeal, of course, brought him into collision with the conservative party, and in 1865 he found himself obliged to head a secession from the original society. A creed was definitely formulated, and the new community called itself the Brahmo Somaj of India, the members who were left being generally known by the title of the Adi (or ancient) Somaj. Keshub, before his conversion to Brahmoism, had belonged to the Vaishnava sect, or Vishnu worshippers, and he brought much of the emotional fervour which characterises these devotees into the society. Great stress began now to be laid upon the emancipation and education of women, and the services of the Brahmo meeting-house were elaborated and improved.

In 1870 Keshub visited England, where he received a warm welcome from the Unitarian "churches," and some sanguine people thought from his great admiration for the character of Christ that he was about to become a Christian. On his return, however, he seems to have reacted in the direction of Orientalism, and to have somewhat lost his

head. The claim to inspiration and autocracy was now more definitely put forward, and led to a further disruption in the society. Those who were unable to accept these new developments after a prolonged contest finally separated themselves from their leader, and formed themselves into a fresh body, upon a more democratic basis, distinguishing themselves by the name of the Sadharan or General Somaj. One very unfortunate cause of Keshub's loss of popularity was his consenting to marry his daughter to the Maharajah of Kuch Behar, at an age lower than that which he himself had settled upon for the Brahmo community—a grave inconsistency which did much to injure his influence. A very considerable following, however, remained faithful to him, and the body over which he presided designated itself by the name of the "New Dispensation," and claimed to be the medium of fresh doctrinal revelations. The type of worship prevailing in this society was distinguished by its emotional and ceremonial style, dancing, in the Hindu fashion, being introduced as a divine solemnity. The seceding party, on the other hand, modelled themselves on a more puritanical basis, and, discarding the mysticism of the others, carried on the rationalistic aspect of the movement, allying themselves more and more to European and American modes of thought. On January 8th, 1884, Keshub died, and, to evidence the catholicity of the movement, was first burnt and then buried, his tombstone being decorated with a trident, crescent, and cross. A committee of twelve "apostles" was appointed to carry on his work.

There are now, therefore, three Theistic sects in Calcutta, with about two hundred "churches" scattered throughout India:

The "Adi Somaj," which consists almost exclusively of the large joint family of the patriarch Devendra Nath Tagore, and has ceased to exert much interest or influence.

The "New Dispensation," which retains the "church" erected by Keshub, but whose influence largely diminished at his death, though many of his followers are men of considerable earnestness and devotion. They are still distinguished by their mystical and emotional character. They have suffered much from bitter internal dissensions, and most unseemly broils have occurred in their services. Their most prominent adherent, Babu Protab Mozoomdar, has practically severed his connection with them, and set up for himself.

The third sect, the "Sadharan Somaj," has built itself a place of worship, and is, perhaps, the most progressive of the three. It appears to be the most attractive to the Hindu students, and possesses some men of real ability. Their chief leader at present is Pundit Sivanath Shastri, who has considerable oratorical power. The services are fairly well attended, especially at the yearly festival in January. They, too, however, are suffering much from internal dissensions and jealousies, especially between the reactionary and progressive parties. Their theology also fluctuates between Pantheism and Unitarianism.

All sects, however, are now distinguished by a strong animus against Christianity. The hopes formed concerning their progress towards the faith have not been justified, though there have been individual conversions. At present both mystics and rationalists, bitterly as they are opposed, agree in repudiation of the Christian faith, though the former party are fond of using its terminology in a fanciful and sentimental fashion. The latter have largely moulded their beliefs on Channing, Pember, Emerson, and Martineau, and have strongly imbibed their "anti-dogmatic" sentiments. Of late Professor Caird has had considerable influence on their mode of thought.

But it is perhaps by their influence on Hindu thought and practice that the Somaj has worked most effectually.

Hindu thought has through its influence become far more Theistic, and its practice far more liberal. There is no doubt that it has held up a high ideal, both of religion and morality, and popularised many social improvements. Whatever be their ultimate destiny, the people of India will have owed much to its regenerating influence. The conceit and self-sufficiency which tends to make the society unpopular have perhaps prevented it from receiving its due meed of honour either from Hindus or Christians. We must understand that whatever victories it has achieved are really triumphs of Christianity, from which the Brahmo community has originally derived its origin.

APPENDIX B.

STAFF OF THE MISSION.

1880.

Priests: Edward Francis Willis (*Superior*).
Wilfrid Bird Hornby.
Ernest Faulkner Brown.

1881.

Priests: Edward Francis Willis (*Superior*).
Wilfrid Bird Hornby.
Ernest Faulkner Brown.
Marsham Frederick Argles.

1882.

Priests: Edward Francis Willis (*Superior*).
Wilfrid Bird Hornby.
Ernest Faulkner Brown.
Marsham Frederick Argles.
Philip Samuel Smith.
Layman: Ishan C. Chowdry.

1883.

Priests: Edward Francis Willis (*Superior*).
Wilfrid Bird Hornby.

Ernest Faulkner Brown.
Philip Samuel Smith.
Layman: Ishan C. Chowdry.

1884.

Priests: Ernest Faulkner Brown.
Philip Samuel Smith.
Layman: Ishan C. Chowdry.

1885.

Priests: Ernest Faulkner Brown.
Philip Samuel Smith.
Layman: Ishan C. Chowdry.

1886.

Priests: Charles William Townsend (*Superior*).
Ernest Faulkner Brown.
Philip Samuel Smith.
Charles Henley Walker.
Layman: Ishan C. Chowdry.

1887.

Priests: Charles William Townsend (*Superior*).
Ernest Faulkner Brown.
Charles Henley Walker.
Maurice Frederick Bell.
Layman: Ishan C. Chowdry.

1888.

Priests: Charles William Townsend (*Superior*).
Ernest Faulkner Brown.
Charles Henley Walker.
James Legard Peach.
Halhed Sydney Moore.
Layman: Ishan C. Chowdry.

1889.

Priests: Ernest Faulkner Brown.
Charles Henley Walker.
James Legard Peach.
Halhed Sydney Moore.
Laymen: Oswald Lloyd.
Ishan C. Chowdry.

1890.

Priests: Henry Whitehead (*Superior*).
Ernest Faulkner Brown.
Charles Henley Walker.
James Legard Peach.
Halhed Sydney Moore.
Walter Paul Gray Field.
Laymen: Oswald Lloyd.
Ishan C. Chowdry.

1891.

Priests: Henry Whitehead (*Superior*).
Ernest Faulkner Brown.
Charles Henley Walker.
James Legard Peach.
Halhed Sydney Moore.
Walter Paul Gray Field.
Laymen: Oswald Lloyd.
A. Edward Franklin.
Ishan C. Chowdry.

1892.

Priests: Henry Whitehead (*Superior*).
Ernest Faulkner Brown.
Charles Henley Walker.

James Legard Peach.
Halhed Sydney Moore.
Walter Paul Gray Field.
A. Edward Franklin.
Laymen: Ishan C. Chowdry.
Oswald Lloyd.
Horace Conway.
Henry Woodward.

1893.

Priests: Henry Whitehead (*Superior*).
Ernest Faulkner Brown.
Charles Henley Walker.
James Legard Peach.
Halhed Sydney Moore.
A. Edward Franklin.
Frederick Wingfield Douglass.
Edward Manley.
George Longridge.
Laymen: Oswald Lloyd.
Horace Conway.
Henry Woodward.

1894.

Priests: Henry Whitehead (*Superior*).
Ernest Faulkner Brown.
Charles Henley Walker.
James Legard Peach.
Frederick Wingfield Douglass.
Edward Manley.
George Longridge.
Laymen: Oswald Lloyd.
Henry Woodward.

1895.

Priests: Henry Whitehead (*Superior*).
Ernest Faulkner Brown.
Charles Henley Walker.
James Legard Peach.
Frederick Wingfield Douglass.
Ernest Linwood Strong.
Ronald Ringrose.
Laymen: Oswald Lloyd.
James Cook.

1896.

Priests: Henry Whitehead (*Superior*).
Ernest Faulkner Brown.
Charles Henley Walker.
Frederick Wingfield Douglass.
Ernest Linwood Strong.
Laymen: Oswald Lloyd.
James Cook.

1897.

Priests: Henry Whitehead (*Superior*).
Ernest Faulkner Brown.
Charles Henley Walker.
Frederick Wingfield Douglass.
Ernest Linwood Strong.
Charles Thomas Campion.
John Roper Cooke.
A. Edward Franklin.
Horace Conway.
Laymen: Oswald Lloyd.
F. W. Barber.

1898.

Priests: Henry Whitehead (*Superior*).
Ernest Faulkner Brown.
Charles Henley Walker.
Frederick Wingfield Douglass.
Ernest Linwood Strong.
John Roper Cooke.
A. Edward Franklin.
Horace Conway.
Charles W. McLaughlan.

Laymen: Oswald Lloyd.
F. W. Barber.

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